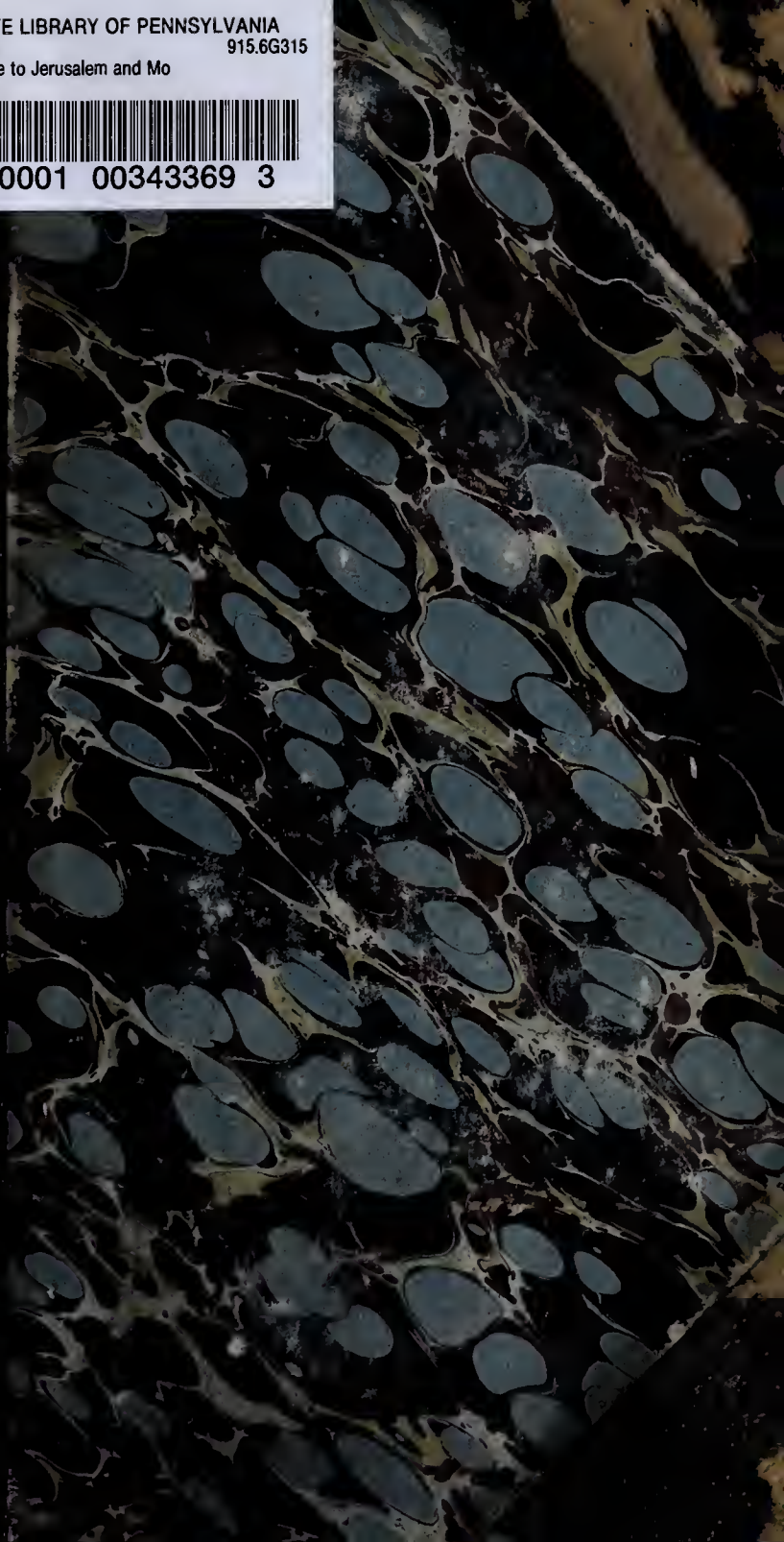


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TO

JERUSALEM AND MOUNT SINAI.

BY BARON GERAMB,

MONK OF THE ORDER OF LA TRAPPE.

IN TWO VOLUMES.

VOL. I.

PHILADELPHIA:
CAREY AND HART.
1840.

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P R E F A C E.

SOME days had elapsed since the events of July, 1830. Peaceful monks were engaged in the labours of agriculture, singing the praises of the Lord, sharing what they had with the poor, and incessantly praying for the happiness and prosperity of France. The news of the day never came to interrupt the silence of death to which they had devoted themselves. The monastery of Notre Dame de la Trappe du Mont des Olives, situated near Mühlhausen in Alsau, was an establishment which deserved to be protected. It was not. Still it is our duty to declare, and we have great pleasure in publishing that, so far was the government from sharing the violence of our enemies, that it bestowed, and still continues to bestow, marks of kindness on us, as a peaceable and inoffensive institution. As for the people of the environs, in general eminently pious, they were not content with lavishing upon us the most touching proof of interest; they also came forward most zealously to guard our monastery in the night, lest it might be set on fire.

I accuse nobody. I throw myself at the feet of Jesus Christ, and beseech him in his infinite mercy to open the eyes of those who were our persecutors, and to forgive as we forgive them.

Our church was shut up. We were obliged to relinquish our monastic habit, and all the monks who were not Frenchmen received orders to leave France. We, landed proprietors, who had adopted France for our country, who took no concern in public events, who knew nothing about them, and

were absolutely ignorant of all that was passing beyond our own walls, obeying the laws, paying our contributions, submissive to the new government as to the old, feeding the poor with the fruit of our labours, were driven from our asylum by persons without right and without authority. The sick, the infirm, all, without exception, were obliged to depart. Order was not yet established.

A monastery of Trappist nuns shared the same fate. Never shall I forget the day and hour when the doors of that monastery were thrown open. I behold its scared inmates issuing from the sanctuary where their hearts had found rest; I see them watering with their tears the soil from which they were so cruelly driven. One young nun was borne on a bier by four sisters; she expired a few paces from the sacred asylum! Her bed of dust was soon surrounded by a concourse of persons, who came to visit the grave of the young martyr.

To return to the world after being-separated from it for sixteen years, would have been heart-rending. I asked and obtained permission of my superiors to write to the abbot of St. Urban, to inquire whether he would have the kindness to admit me till happier times into that celebrated abbey of St. Bernard in the canton of Lucerne. That worthy prelate acceded to my request with that charity which characterizes him, which gains him all hearts, and which extends far beyond the circuit of his abbey.

I frequently visited our communities scattered among the mountains of Helvetia: I was even obliged to sojourn for a considerable time at Solothurn and Berne, for the purpose of interesting those cantons in our favour.

At St. Urban I heard of those profanations which have for some time sullied France. My soul was plunged into deep affliction. I frequently prostrated myself before God to implore his grace and forgiveness. Alas! the crosses were thrown down; the sacred emblem of our redemption was dragged in the mud!

I was ill at Solothurn, worse at St. Urban, and very ill indeed at Berne. Seeing that our reunion into a community became a matter of greater difficulty from day to day, I asked leave of my superiors to make a pilgrimage to Palestine, which they granted. I then applied to Monseigneur d'Angelis, the nuncio of the Holy see in Switzerland, in order to obtain through him the approbation of his holiness, his blessing, and letters of recommendation from the sacred propaganda. His holiness granted me all that I desired with the

most touching kindness, and I made preparations for my journey.

The letters here offered to the public were written by a Trappist monk, poor in spirit, poor in human knowledge. He undertook this pilgrimage to the Holy Land merely to pray, to adore, and to do penance.

My work is not destined for that class of people of the world whom such a book as this cannot please unless charms of style, purity and elegance of the language, grace and pomp of the descriptions and delineations enhance its merit. What interest of this sort could I pretend to excite after writers like Messrs. De Chateaubriand, Michaud, Poujoulat, and De Lamartine, whose names form so fair a portion of the literary glory of France? My letters are addressed principally to that class of readers, who do not require Truth to be shown to them tricked out with all the ornaments by which she can be embellished. They are addressed more especially to those simple and pious readers whose hearts one is sure to satisfy, when, while reminding them of all that Christ has done for us, while guiding them as it were into his footsteps, one presents to them new motives for admiring, for adoring his infinite goodness, for loving and practising his religion, and for attaching themselves to Him as to the only Saviour.

Once more, then, I went to Palestine only to adore, to weep, and to pray. I purposed not to measure the sacred monuments with the compasses of incredulity; plenty of travellers have taken that task upon themselves. Most of them hurry through Palestine with such speed, that their imagination is obliged to supply what has escaped their fugitive observation. In spite, however, of that spirit of the age, which makes them write with such levity of monuments so venerable, their hearts are not unmoved. Religion will assert her rights. Their hearts have throbbed while they were ascending Calvary; when they beheld the ensanguined rock on which the Saviour of the world yielded his last breath to reconcile earth with Heaven; when they visited that sacred tomb, which his victorious foot has overstepped. But this emotion of heart soon subsided; the mind took up the pen which pride presented to it.

I have wrote these letters amid the scorching sands of the desert, on the tops of arid mountains, on board a ship tossed by the waves, beneath a tent, upon a dromedary, in a grotto, stretched in a cell upon a bed of pain; but I think that I have never lost sight of the presence of my God; I have always

striven to make known His love to men, and to kindle in their hearts the love of Him.

I have seen Bethlehem and Calvary, Nazareth and the unbelieving city; I have travelled those now desolate routes where the Son of Man strewed so many favours and relieved so many afflictions. Seated on the scattered stones of the sanctuary, kneeling in the Stable at Bethlehem, humbly prostrate in the Tomb of our Saviour, I have noted down the diverse and multiplied emotions with which my soul was filled. Amid these mighty ruins, piled up here and there by the hand of Providence, the prophetic words of Isaiah and Jeremiah seemed still to ring in my ears; and more than once my tears flowed at these religious recollections. Then did I think of the fair land of France, and implore the mercy of God in behalf of that country, in places that remain everlasting witnesses of his severe justice.

CONTENTS.

LETTER I.

Announcement of my Departure	P. 13
--	-------

LETTER II.

Ceremony in the Church of St. Urban—Departure—Arrival at Lucerne	14
---	----

LETTER III.

Illness—Federal Diet—M. Lutz	15
--	----

LETTER IV.

Execution of a Criminal for Murder—Custom at Lucerne in regard to Criminals who will not confess their guilt—Shocking instance of this kind	16
---	----

LETTER V.

Disinterested conduct of M. Lutz—Christian charity	17
--	----

LETTER VI.

Departure from Lucerne—The Lake—Hill of Grütli—Chapel built on the spot where William Tell escaped from his Guards— Walter Furst, Arnold Melchthal, and Werner Stauffacher	19
--	----

LETTER VII.

Mount Gothard ; new road over it—Airolo—Magadino—Steam-ves-
sel—Lago Maggiore—Recollections—Colossal Statue of St.
Charles Borromeo—Crew of the Steamer—Milan—Its Cath-
edral—Hungarian Soldiers—the Emperor Francis—Piety of the
Austrian Soldiers—Lieutenant-General Baron de Geramb 20

LETTER VIII.

Venice—Count Spaur, Governor of the Venitian Provinces—Ad-
miral Paulucci—M. Theodorovitch 25

LETTER IX.

Departure from Venice—Lazaretto of Poveglia—The Brig Ulysses—
Contrary Wind—The Bucentaur 25

LETTER X.

Departure from the Channel—Religious Indifference—Nativity of
the Virgin Mary—Illness on Board—A Calm—Falcon—Captain
of the Ulysses—Tempestuous Weather—Reminiscences of La
Trappe—Corfu—Zante—Candia—Nights on Deck—Dove—
War between the Turks and Greeks—Reciprocal Cruelties—
Anecdote on this subject—Superstition of the Captain—Cholera
—The Austrian Consul—Franciscan Convent—La Marina—
Larnaca—Island of Cyprus—Visitandines—War between the
Viceroy of Egypt and the Pacha of Acre 27

LETTER XI.

Paralysis—Dangerous Symptoms—Attentions of the Cónsul, the
Fathers of the Holy Land and the Physicians—Convalescence
—Pictures presented by the Empress Maria Theresa—Rene-
gades—Plague—Departure for Jaffa 41

LETTER XII.

Turkish Schooner, the Elpis (Hope)—The Captain ; the Crew—
Moustapha, the Captain's Son—Impatience to descry the Holy
Land—Pilgrims on board—Young Greek Woman and her Chil-
dren—View of the Coast of Palestine—Jaffa ; its dangerous
Road ; Landing—Monastery of the Fathers of the Holy Land—
Wreck of the Turkish Schooner—Jaffa taken by Ibrahim Pacha
—M. Mostras, Russian Consul—Veiled Women—Franciscan
Fathers and their Convents in Asia and Africa 45

LETTER XIII.

Departure from Jaffa—Unpleasant riding—Adventure in the Market-place—Splendid Weather—Cattle—Rama—Monastery—Cistern of St. Helena—Tower of the Forty Martyrs 52

LETTER XIV.

Departure from Rama—Mountains of Judea—Village of Jeremiah—Abou Gosh—Bedouins—Mount of Olives—Jerusalem—Entry into the Holy City—Church of St. Saviour—Franciscan Fathers—Foot-washing—Cell—First Night in Jerusalem—Terrace of the Monastery—View from it—Via Dolorosa—Pilate's Prætorium—The Gate Bab-el-Sidi-Mariam—Spot where Stephen was stoned—Garden of Gethsemane—The Brook Cedron—Olive Trees—Grotto of the Agony—Place where Judas betrayed his Master—Festival of the Conception—Magnificence of the Church—Visits to the principal Fathers 55

LETTER XV.

Visit to the Church of the Holy Sepulchre—Franciscan Fathers cleaning the sides of the Sepulchre—Cell—Gallery adjoining to it—Entry into the Holy Sepulchre 64

LETTER XVI.

Impression made by the Church of the Holy Sepulchre—History of that Church—Its Destruction by Fire—It is rebuilt by the Greeks and the Armenians—They oppress the Latins—Description of the Church—Mass in the Holy Sepulchre 67

LETTER XVII.

Pilgrims at Jerusalem—Children of the Pilgrims—Procession—Tomb of Godfrey and Baldwin—Sword of Godfrey—Jerusalem taken by the Egyptians—Favour shown by them to the Christians—Influence of Money in the Countries Ruled by the Koran 84

LETTER XVIII.

Departure for Bethlehem—Road—Plain of Raphaim—Greek Monastery of Elijah—Rachel's Tomb—View of Bethlehem—The Holy Grotto 90

LETTER XIX.

Bethlehem—The Monastery—Churches—Description of the Sacred Grotto—St. Jerome—St. Paula and her Daughter Eustochium—Sanctuary of the Nativity—The Manger—The Magi—Solemn Procession at Midnight 95

LETTER XX.

Inhabitants of Bethlehem—Women—Houses—Costumes—Marriages—Manners—History of a Widow—Funerals—Bawling—Anecdotes on that subject 105

LETTER XXI.

Reservoirs of David—Pools of Solomon—Grotto of Milk—Village of the Shepherds—Well of the Virgin Mary—Place where the Shepherds heard the Voices of the Angels—Tekoa—Labyrinth—Hill of the French 116

LETTER XXII.

Dearth—Pestilence—Jerusalem—Siege by Titus—Conversion of Constantine—Julian, the Apostate—The Caliph Omar I.—Crusades—Taking of Jerusalem—Carnage—Saladin 123

LETTER XXIII.

Way of the Captivity—Road of the Cross 152

LETTER XXIV.

Mount of Olives—Valley of Jehoshaphat—Brook Cedron—Church of the Virgin Mary—Tombs of Joseph, Joachim, and Anna—Admirable View of the Mount of Olives—Foot-Print left at the Ascension—Chapel on the Spot where Christ taught his Disciples the Lord's Prayer—Place where the Apostles composed the Profession of Faith 169

LETTER XXV.

Changeable Temperature at Jerusalem—Aspect of that City during and after Lent—Aceldama, or Field of Blood—Valley of Gehennon—Tombs hewn out of the Rock—Well of Nehemiah—Fountain of Siloa—Village of Siloa—Mount of Offence—Tomb of Ahsalom—Tomb of Barrachias—Tomb of Zachariah—Tomb of Jehoshaphat—Tombs of the Kings—Tombs of the Judges . 178

LETTER XXVI.

Abode in the Holy Sepulchre during the three days preceding Ash-Wednesday 189

LETTER XXVII.

Site of the ancient Temple erected by Solomon—Mosque of Omar 191

LETTER XXVIII.

Excursion to St. Saba—Camp of Bedouins; Dearth prevailing in it—View of the Monastery of St. Saba—Greek Monks—Apartments—Dinner—Superb Palm-tree—Pilgrims—Night passed at St. Saba—Brook Cedron—The Pilgrims laid under contribution by the Arabs 198

LETTER XXIX.

Road to Bethany—Ground where grew the Fig-tree struck with barrenness—Bethany—Sepulchre of Lazarus—House of Martha and Mary—Stone, on which Christ is said to have rested himself—Bethphage—Place where Judas hanged himself—Impudence 208

LETTER XXX.

Excursion to the Jordan and the Dead Sea—Travelling Companions—Precaution for the Safety of the Caravan—Bedouin Escort—Arabian Horses—Provisions stolen—Jericho—The Aga and his superb Horse—Elisha's Fountain—Mountain where our Saviour passed forty Days in Fasting and Prayer—Ruins of Jericho—The Jordan—The Dead Sea—Salt—Statue of Lot's Wife—Return to Jerusalem—Night spent at the Gate of the City 213

LETTER XXXI.

Description of Jerusalem—Mount Sion—House of Caiaphas—Tomb of David—The Hall of the Last Supper 235

LETTER XXXII.

Population—House of Dives—Scene of the Martyrdom of St. James the Great—Grotto of the Immaculate Conception—Prison of St. Peter—House of Mary, Mother of John Mark—Ancient Christian Hospital, built by St. Helena—Pool of Bethsaida—Interior of Jerusalem—Quarter of the Armenians—Streets—Synagogues—Jewish School—Jews 242

LETTER XXXIII.

Seclusion in the Church of the Holy Sepulchre—Cell—Gallery—Pilgrims—Winding-Sheets distributed by the Armenian Priests—Turks at the Door of the Church—Cruel Mode of preserving Order—Palm-Sunday—Procession of the Catholics; of the Armenians—Wednesday in Passion-Week—Office of the Darkness—Maundy-Thursday—Solemn Mass—Procession—Foot-Washing

—Good-Friday—The Door of the Church forced by the Greek and Armenian Pilgrims—Dinner of the Community—Darkness—Procession to Calvary—Solemn Service on Holy-Saturday—Contrast between the Catholics and the Greeks—Night between Holy-Saturday and Easter-Sunday—Assemblage of Ten Thousand Pilgrims—Easter-Sunday 257

LETTER XXXIV.

Excursion to St. John's in the Desert—Convent of the Holy Cross—Village of St. John—Monastery—Beautiful Church belonging to the Franciscan Fathers—Sanctuary—Place of the Visitation—Grotto of St. John Baptist—Desert—Tomb of St. Elizabeth 280

LETTER XXXV.

Monastery of St. Saviour at Jerusalem—Table of the Fathers—Lent kept by them—Extortions of the Turks—Letter on this subject to the French Ambassador at Constantinople—Franciscan Missionaries—Letter and Donation of Henry VIII. of England—Gifts of the Sovereigns of Europe to the Establishments in the Holy Land—Pilgrims of Distinction in the Fifteenth Century—Annoyance of the Catholics by the Greeks—Comparison between the Greek and Latin Clergy—Reflections on the Situation of the Latin Fathers of the Holy Land 285

PILGRIMAGE

TO

Siboney

JERUSALEM AND MOUNT SINAI.

Samuel Steele

LETTER I.

Announcement of my Departure.

Abbey of St. Urban, June 23d, 1831.

I AM setting out at last, my dear friend. I shall start to-morrow, notwithstanding my precarious health, notwithstanding the dangers of which your friendship for me causes you so much apprehension. At three in the morning I shall commence my happy pilgrimage. I must confess that, at my age, scarcely recovered from a serious illness, the plague which is ravaging the countries that I am going to visit, and the troubles prevailing there, would be enough to intimidate me if I were running after the perishable riches of this world. But, of what account are the scorching skies of Asia and Africa, contagious diseases, my infirmities, and the calamities which inundate this vale of tears! Nay, I already feel happy in the prospect of the sufferings and perils that await me. I say to myself, my right hand upon my heart and my eyes uplifted to heaven: I am going to visit the holy places—that is the object of my journey; I am going to weep over the tomb of Jesus Christ; the paternal hand of my God will lead me to the term to which his love is calling me.

Pray for me; adieu!

LETTER II.

Ceremony in the Church of St. Urban—Departure—Arrival at Lucerne.

Lucerne, June 25th, 1831.

HERE I am at Lucerne, my dear friend. I shall stay here but three or four days; I shall then embark on its enchanting lake for Altorf; I shall cross the Gothard, and proceed as expeditiously as possible to Venice, and perhaps to Triesti, where I hope to find some vessel bound to Alexandria or the island of Cyprus.

An affecting custom prevails in our Order. When a member of it is leaving the monastery upon a long journey, he goes and falls prostrate upon his face in the church, and the assembled community pray aloud that the blessing of the Lord may attend him. I was to set out very early; I requested the abbot to permit those prayers, which I so ardently desired, to be said after complins: he complied. Never did service appear to me more solemn; never in our sacred hymns had I raised my voice to Heaven with deeper emotion, or sent up with more fervour the expression of my love and my gratitude to the foot of the throne of the Almighty. The *Salve*, which finishes complins being over, I descended from my stall and prostrated myself. O God! thou knowest what were the feelings of thy poor servant, when all his brethren joined in earnest prayer to thine infinite mercy to bless and protect him!

I was moved to tears; with the sigh heaved by my oppressed heart were wafted the most fervent prayers for the prosperity of the monastery that I was leaving. I besought more especially the God of mercy to bless my pilgrimage, to give me the grace to fulfil the object of it in such manner as should be agreeable to Him, and to preserve me from every act, every thought, that could displease Him. I walked in the morning, perhaps for the last time, through the majestic cloisters of St. Urban. My whole being was thrilled with deep emotion. One of the brotherhood advanced towards me; it was the

reverend father abbot, who was going to the church. I durst not speak to him; it was forbidden by our rules: but at such moments how necessary it is to speak! I threw myself at the feet of the virtuous prelate; I had need of a fresh benediction: he pressed me long to his bosom, and I felt the tears that trickled from his eyes fall upon my cheeks.

LETTER III.

Illness—Federal Diet—M. Lutz.

Lucerne, July 2d.

I was to have set out yesterday; the boat was ready; and the people were carrying my things on board, when a violent fever seized and threw me upon a bed of pain.

July 6th.

The fever continues; it has made me very weak.

The federal diet meets this year in this city. The diplomatic body is here. The kind and amiable Count Louis de Bombelles, our worthy ambassador, whom I have the honour to be long acquainted with, bestows upon me the marks of the kindest interest: at his request, M. de Lutz, of Berne, physician in chief of the federal army, is attending me. He is eminent in his profession. But I cannot help saying that I suffer a great deal.

July 12th.

The diet has to-day opened its session. I had received several tickets for the ceremony, which is rather curious, on account of the singular dresses of the ushers. But, though it was the day on which the fever leaves me a little ease, I did not comply with the invitation. Ah! what to a monk, above all to a monk of La Trappe, a pilgrim to the Holy Land, are all the vain ceremonies of the world!

LETTER IV.

Execution of a Criminal for Murder—Custom at Lucerne in regard to Criminals who will not confess their guilt—Shocking instance of this kind.

Lucerne, July 20th.

THERE is in the prison of this town a man sentenced to die for murder: he is to be executed on Saturday. I wrote to the minister of Lucerne, requesting permission to spend the last night with this unhappy man, and to accompany him to the place of execution. The worthy pastor called to see me, and told me that it is not customary to pass the night with a condemned criminal; that the man, for whom I wished to perform this act of charity, would receive the sacrament at six o'clock in the evening of the day before the execution; that next morning, at five o'clock, the ecclesiastics would repair to the prison; and that, if I chose to join the sad train, I could go with them to that scene of misery and tears.

The culprit had appeared to receive some consolation on learning that a monk of La Trappe would accompany him in his last moments; but I thought it right to consult on this point the canons, Widmer and Geiger, who, with great piety, combine virtue, intelligence, and an intimate acquaintance with the customs of the country. A few hours before the execution, I received the following letter from canon Geiger:—

“Very reverend Father,

“I have just spoken with canon Widmer, and our opinion is this:—If you accompany the criminal, you will present a new object of curiosity to the whole population; all eyes will be directed to you and your monastic habit; of course attention will be diverted from the unhappy criminal, for whom all that population is now praying in silence. You mean to do good; you would perhaps do harm.”

I felt it to be my duty to follow, without hesitation, the pious advice of these worthy ecclesiastics. Still I was somewhat mortified that I could not afford the cul-

soul thirsted. Never had I been so powerfully, so deeply moved. I cast a look over the land that I was about to quit, and where I was leaving so many beings dear to my heart, beings whom I thought it likely I might never see again ; I recommended them to that great God, the father of all mercies ; I prayed for you, ye brethren of my monastery, scattered over the mountains of Switzerland ; and for you, too, my children, who, notwithstanding so long an absence, were as present to me as when I took you from the arms of your mother to press you to my heart.

I arrived in the evening at Airolo, exhausted with fatigue—I was still so very weak. Next day at Magadino near Lake Maggiore, I resolved to embark in the steam-boat. Separated from the world for the last seventeen years, I knew nothing of steam-vessels, either from experience or report ; this trip, therefore, held out extraordinary attractions to me.

And here, my dear friend, I must reveal to you what was passing in my heart for a few moments, from which you will see what empire pride still had over me, though so long a monk of La Trappe. The steam-vessel is divided into two parts : the one, covered, is occupied by what are called people of respectability ; underneath is an apartment for their use ; the other part is open ; the room beneath, less commodious and less elegantly fitted up, is scarcely ever occupied by any but persons of the lower class, or by those who wish to travel at a cheap rate. Well ! would you believe it ! never was I so perplexed as when I was asked in a loud voice, and before all the passengers, what place I would take. A little contest ensued between M. the Baron de Geramb and Father Marie Joseph. The Baron de Geramb strove to prove to Father Marie Joseph that every consideration imperatively required him to take his place in the first-mentioned division. He had a thousand reasons to adduce : in the first place, decency ; in the next, the danger of getting a *coup de soleil*, the cure of which would have been very expensive for one who had taken a vow of poverty ; and then cleanliness, which is also a virtue, &c. Father Marie Joseph alleged, on his part, that, having taken a vow of

risked my life for that beloved sovereign; I would still sacrifice it a thousand times. All his subjects would devote themselves in like manner; for that august monarch is beloved because he is just; I will say almost adored because he is full of kindness and beneficence, and because his heart is the sanctuary of virtue. The long years that he has reigned have appeared to us very short: may the Lord yet spare him long to his people!

I must acquaint you with another of my joys. The greatest pleasure that I experienced during my sojourn in Milan, was to see our soldiers come in crowds to the cathedral to worship the Lord of hosts. My heart throbbed on beholding these warriors on their knees before their God, praying with that devotion which draws down his favours and merits his blessings.

What a soothing and religious impression is produced in the soul by the aspect of that manly pride which fears not to bend humbly before our altars! But what pain and pity does it excite to see the soldier, respectful sometimes even to servility before his superior or his king, daring to indulge in irreverence in the temple of the King of kings, or the Lord of lords!

I knew that my brother, the lieutenant-general, was at Milan. I had not seen him since I left the dungeon of Vincennes, when he was at Paris with the Austrian army. My illness had detained me two months at Lucerne; I was apprehensive lest fraternal affection should raise obstacles to the rapidity of my journey; I was anxious to reach Venice or Trieste as speedily as possible, for the purpose of embarking. I hesitated, therefore: I knew not whether I should go to see him. Alas! it is so sad to see one another for a moment, and then to part perhaps for ever. I could not, however, withstand the desire to press him to my heart. He looked at me—that kind brother—without being able to recognise my features. “It is indeed Ferdinand’s voice,” said he, “but I can scarcely persuade myself that it is he.” Seventeen years in the monastery of La Trappe had furrowed my brow with wrinkles, and stripped the hair from my head; but they had not changed my affection for him.

prit that consolation which he appeared to wish for. He was conducted to the place of execution; on reaching the scaffold, he was blindfolded; from the top of the scaffold the minister of the town delivered an address to the people. The criminal was within hearing of part of it, and the fatal stroke fell upon his resigned head.

There prevails at Lucerne a very extraordinary custom, a custom that makes one shudder, and that exists nowhere else. The law directs that sentence of death shall not be pronounced upon any who have not confessed their crime. Convicted criminals, from whom no confession can be obtained, are punished with hard labour only. But what a horrible condition is tacked to the miserable life which is left them! At the next execution, the last condemned criminal is compelled to repair to the spot where the scaffold is erected, to catch the head as it falls, and to carry it to the grave in the presence of the whole population. Some months ago, an unfortunate young woman was convicted of infanticide, and executed. Her wretched accomplice, condemned only to forced labour, because he would not confess his crime, was therefore obliged, as the last person condemned, to take the head of her whom he had loved, whom he had seduced, whom he had ruined. At the sight of that pale and livid head, of that blood-stained hair, he started back in horror and affright. In vain he refused to obey; the application of the whip forced him to perform the task imposed by the law. Base and contemptible spirit! he should have prayed to God for pardon, have confessed his crime, and died.

LETTER V.

Disinterested conduct of M. Lutz—Christian charity.

Lucerne, August 17th, 1831.

SINCE I last wrote to you, my dear friend, I have been very ill: God tries me, but he supports me. With a burning fever is coupled a complaint in the eyes, which renders me nearly blind. The loss of sight, for a resigned

Christian, facilitates inward devotion, keeps aloof from him a multitude of objects which might distract his attention : his spirit beholds God, beholds itself ; in this contemplation it finds happiness. O my God! thy blessed will be done! To be sure, thou hast said to my heart that I shall soon see again. I have read somewhere that atheism, combined with loss of sight, is the last degree of misfortune, and certainly imagination cannot conceive of anything worse.

Though extremely weak, I have been mending for some days past, and I am firmly resolved to pursue my journey. -

I cannot give you an idea of all the kindness, of all the charitable attentions, of which I have been the object during my illness. M. Lutz, after attending me with a zeal and assiduity worthy of all my gratitude, has crowned his benevolence by the most generous disinterestedness. When addressing to him my acknowledgments, I had thought it right to send him some money. "I am the physician of Berne, and not of Lucerne," he replied, "and I cannot receive any fee. I am amply repaid for the attentions which I have had it in my power to pay by the happiness of having made your acquaintance." These few words are sufficient to delineate the heart of this celebrated physician, whose skill is set off by a delicacy of sentiments which is daily becoming more rare. I had the satisfaction to prevail upon him to accept a trifling article which had belonged to me.

Would that I could tell you, too, all that I feel for those kind, those excellent creatures, with whom I sought an asylum! No, Christian couple, never shall I forget you! on the banks of the Jordan, of the Lake of Tiberias, of the Dead Sea, of the Nile, as on the shores of the Lake of Lucerne, your image will always be present to my mind, and deeply engraven on my heart. Worthy Lucia B——, thou wilt be ever present with me, dressing my wound, and bathing my eye deprived of sight. And thou, too, her husband, my dear and venerable friend, who hast rendered to thy suffering guest all the services of a perfect charity, never, no never shall I forget thee! And to whom am I indebted for these services? To

poor people, actuated by the prospect of gain, by the hope of recompense? No, to wealthy but Christian people, who know that the services rendered to our neighbour are recorded in heaven; to people who love God, who serve him with simplicity and fervour, and who behold Jesus Christ in every suffering fellow-creature.

I must also make mention to you, my dear friend, of a beloved family which has heaped kindness upon me during my illness; which, during the paroxysms of my fever, wiped the hot perspiration from my brow, and gave me proofs of the most sincere attachment. Jules, Augustine, Hermine, and Marie de F——, never shall I forget you!

LETTER VI.

Departure from Lucerne—The Lake—Hill of Grütli—Chapel built on the spot where William Tell escaped from his Guards—Walter Furst, Arnold Melchthal, and Werner Stauffacher.

Altorf, August 25th, 1831.

At length I have bidden adieu to Lucerne, and to avoid eight or ten hours' navigation, which might have been attended with some danger in my state of convalescence, I resolved to take a carriage to Fluelen, and there I embarked. Oh! what a lovely day! what a magnificent lake is that of Lucerne, and how sorry I am that my illness prevented me from visiting in detail its enchanting shore! I determined, however, to cross it from Fluelen to Altorf. I wanted to see, to feel, to admire. Is not nature an exquisite prayer-book? How much is he to be pitied who does not perceive God in the beauties which, with lavish hand, he has scattered over this wide world!

I visited the spot memorable in the annals of Switzerland, that hill of Grütli, where three courageous men conceived the design of liberating their country. I saw the place where William Tell escaped from the custody

of its oppressors. A chapel is erected on that spot ; there, mass is performed every year on the anniversary of his deliverance. The walls of the chapel are covered with wretched paintings; representing the oath of Grütli, and the different events of that period. I contemplated these pictures, and I said to myself, with a deep sigh : What crimes have been brought into the world by the abuse of that word *liberty* ! what tears, what blood, has it caused to be shed ! what calamities will it yet occasion !

Walter Furst, Arnold Melchthal, and Werner Stauffacher, ye who with noble heroism sacrificed yourselves for the happiness and the salvation of your country, could I have called forth your shades, could I, unfolding before you the history of the five centuries that have elapsed since ye were no more, have shown you all the calamities which ambitious men have brought upon the earth by profaning the sacred name of *liberty*, seized with horror, fain would ye have been to sink again into your graves.

LETTER VII.

Mount Gothard ; new road over it—Airolo—Magadino—Steam-vessel—Lago Maggiore—Recollections—Colossal Statue of St. Charles Borromeo—Crew of the Steamer—Milan—Its Cathedral—Hungarian Soldiers—the Emperor Francis—Piety of the Austrian Soldiers—Lieutenant-General Baron de Geramb.

Milan, August 27th.

I HAVE crossed the Gothard. That new road is truly worthy of the Romans. I tarried a considerable time on the most elevated point. The tops of mountains have in them something august, something religious ; there the thoughts are raised to divine things, and they invite man to contemplation and prayer. The wind roared ; I could scarcely keep my cloak about me. Elevated above the clouds, I adored the Creator of the universe ; the world seemed at my feet, and I felt in my heart an impulse that hurried me on to other wonders, an impulse that transported me to the bosom of that God for whom my

LETTER VIII.

Venice—Count Spaur, Governor of the Venitian Provinces—Admiral Paulucci—M. Theodorovitch.

Venice, September 4th.

I HAVE been here for these two days, and to-morrow I shall embark for the island of Cyprus. It is a sort of miracle: I had the good fortune to meet with a ship that is still in quarantine, and I have arranged for my passage in her. I am still far from well. On my arrival, the mistress of the hotel where I am staying, perceiving that I was ill, sent for a doctor. I told him that I was setting out for the Holy Land; he supposed that I was delirious. Finding that I adhered to my purpose, he came no more. He is, it seems to me, of the same opinion as my Lucerne physician, who maintained that it was utterly impossible for me to accomplish the undertaking.

A fresh misfortune: I have been so clumsy as to get a fall in the church of St. Mark, which is paved in mosaic, and I was so stunned by it as to be obliged to be carried senseless to the residence of one of the canons. All this is melancholy, to be sure; but God is there, and my good angel accompanies me.

On recovering from my swoon, I hastened to present my letters of recommendation to his excellency Count de Spaur, governor of the Venetian provinces, and to Admiral Paulucci. They received me with that kindness which characterizes them. Count de Spaur is justly venerated in his government; he is a father, an example and an honour, to it. Admiral Paulucci reminds one of the brave Sir Sidney Smith; in my opinion there is a resemblance between the two admirals. The commandant of the port, M. Peter Theodorovitch, rendered me all the services that depended upon him.

LETTER IX.

Departure from Venice—Lazaretto of Poveglia—The Brig Ulysses—
Contrary Wind—The Bucentaur.

Lazaretto of Poveglia, September 6th, 1831,
on board the ship Ulysses.

I HAD so many things to do, my dear friend, during

my stay at Venice, that I could not find a moment, when closing my letter, to bid you adieu, perhaps for a long time. I am on board the ship *Ulysses* ; she has not finished her quarantine, and is subject to all the rigours of the sanitary laws. Since my embarkation I am myself considered as one infected with the plague. This letter will be taken up with pincers, and put into a tin box, and it will come to you stabbed, sprinkled with vinegar, and fumigated.

I left Venice at seven in the morning. The admiralty gondola came to my hotel to fetch me. The captain of the port had kindly caused such necessaries as I should want for the voyage to be purchased for me. I proceeded to the lazaretto, a short league from Venice, and then went on board the ship. The Austrian flag was hoisted on my approach. I was received by the captain, the mate, and the crew.

Before I quitted Venice, I went to the cathedral : the church was not yet open ; twenty poor people were waiting at the gate. Being obliged to pray *afar off*, I called to mind the publican in the Gospel, and said like him : " Lord have mercy upon me, a sinner."

The wind has just shifted : it is directly contrary ; we cannot weigh anchor, and the pilots cannot take us out of the channel.

Six in the evening.

The wind is still contrary. I am on deck, with the glass to my eye. Venice is before me ; Venice, of yore, queen of the sea, now widowed and unmindful of her past glory, but still beautiful and superb notwithstanding her fall. One ought to read, in view of Venice, some of those funeral dirges of the prophets over Tyre and Sidon, queens too of old of the seas and of the nations.

We are nearly on the spot where, not long since, was performed a magnificent ceremony, when the doge espoused the Adriatic Sea. The gilded Bucentaur conveyed the husband to his stormy consort, whose fidelity he thought to secure by throwing a ring into her bosom.

September 7th.

The wind is favourable for us, and I conclude. Adieu,

my dear friend ; when you receive this letter, I shall be far away from you. Adieu, adieu ! Formerly that word produced within me a painful, a poignant feeling : now my heart has comprehended the signification of *adieu* : it is to God (*à Dieu*) that I commend you, that I commit you, and I am easy. And you too, my dear friend, you are saying to me adieu ; and that word refreshes my heart, for you love me in God. Only, in case you should hear of my death in a foreign land, pray for me : the friendship of the Christian is eternal.

LETTER X.

Departure from the Channel—Religious Indifference—Nativity of the Virgin Mary—Illness on Board—A Calm—Falcon—Captain of the *Ulysses*—Tempestuous Weather—Reminiscences of *La Trappe*—*Corfu*—*Zante*—*Candia*—Nights on Deck—Dove—War between the Turks and Greeks—Reciprocal Cruelties—Anecdote on this subject—Superstition of the Captain—Cholera—The Austrian Consul—Franciscan Convent—*La Marina*—*Larnaca*—Island of *Cyprus*—*Visitandines*—War between the Viceroy of Egypt and the Pacha of Acre.

Larnaca, Island of Cyprus, October 15, 1831.

MY dear friend, here you have, in the first place, my journal since our departure from Venice.

September 7th. The wind, as I told you in my last, having become favourable, we stood out of the channel.

Our crew consists of Captain Ragazzi, the mate, and ten sailors, including the cabin-boy, all Venetians. I perceived from the first moment a certain indifference for the observances of religion ; there were no general prayers, so customary on board Italian vessels. The cabin-boy, however, cried in the evening : “ Light the lamps, put out the fire, in the name of Jesus and his blessed Mother, our queen ; may she conduct us safely into port ! Health, liberty in this voyage, as well as in all those that we shall perform, God willing ; a Pater and an Ave for the souls in purgatory, and for our prosperous voyage.” The crew listened with respect, but that was all.

I bluntly made my remarks to the captain on this

subject. He replied that, formerly, the Litanies were recited every evening ; but that, having observed that one or two of his men had turned that practice into ridicule, he had given it up. I made him sensible that this was no reason for relinquishing so pious a custom, adding : “ To-morrow, the anniversary of the nativity of the blessed Virgin, I will begin to read them till our arrival in Cyprus, and not a man shall dare to turn them into ridicule.”

8th. I dressed myself early in my habit of the order of La Trappe, and, though the weather was boisterous, I went upon deck. The seamen received me with joy. I then went and fetched an image of the Virgin, which I had noticed in the cabin ; I fastened it to the mainmast. I had been strongly recommended to the captain ; he submitted with a very good grace to the removal, brought me a hammer and nails, and all passed off in the best possible manner. The Litanies were recited with decency and devotion, and the wind, which for some hours had been contrary, suddenly shifted about after prayers. The sailors immediately cried out :—“ O father, father, the wind has changed !” I replied, smiling : “ God never refuses anything to his blessed mother.” You must be aware, my dear friend, that I mean not to represent this event to you as something supernatural, as a miracle ; but, at the same time, I must confess that confidence was in my heart.

9th. Two of the crew are ill: the mate and the cabin-boy. The fever is violent.

10th. We have three ill. I am in fear of an epidemic disease. The captain appears to be alarmed.

11th. Two of our patients are better. The weather is fine and the wind favourable.

12th. Calm. A falcon paid us a visit. The seamen considered the arrival of this bird as a bad omen.

It is evening ; the fish are leaping about the ship : another bad omen, according to the sailors.—I laugh at them.

The captain is an excellent man, but one must get accustomed to his manners: he has some that are truly peculiar. In France, they would laugh at him ; he is

eccentric, nay, somewhat original. On the very first day, when I was reading my breviary in a low tone, he came behind me, and read, too, stammering, in the most natural way possible. I then shut my book, and put my fingers on my lips, to intimate that he ought to be silent. This conduct surprised him much; he went away somewhat nettled, and fell to singing the *Magnificat* and the *Te Deum*. If I have the pen in my hand, he comes with the utmost simplicity to read what I am writing; if I make him stand back, he goes and opens and turns over my portfolio as innocently as possible, and without meaning any harm. I rap his knuckles, laughing, to make him understand that such behaviour is improper. He then leaves the portfolio, takes up a box of wafers, opens it, the wafers fly away, and he after them to pick them up, but, by the way, he meets with my spectacles. He claps them on his nose, though they are not suited to his sight, and seeks and brings me back, rubbed or broken, some of the wafers which his imprudence has scattered in the wind: he then asks me if my sight is bad In other respects, the captain is a good fellow, obliging, and even pious.

13th. The seamen were right: the weather is frightful; everything is rolling about in the ship. I am sitting on the deck, with my back against a cask, holding by a rope, and reciting my prayers as well as I can.—I am entirely covered by a wave. It was but a moment since I was repeating the words: *Ye seas and ye lightnings, bless the Lord!* This reminds me at once, at La Trappe, we were reciting the service of the Virgin, which service is always recited without light, and at these words: *Ye lightnings and clouds, bless the Lord!* a flash accompanied with a loud clap of thunder, illumined the church to such a degree that we could have fancied it was broad day.

How imposing is the spectacle presented by a ship struggling at sea against all the elements! How did man ever dare to trust himself to so frail a conveyance! God had his designs; he purposed to unite the people of the most distant countries. The sea, though often stormy and full of dangers, is become the bond of charity,

Alas! has not charity on land also its storms and its tempests!

14th. The weather continues.

15th. We have at length a fair wind. Be it what weather it will, I am constantly upon deck. I never go below to sleep for a few hours. How can one relinquish the sight of a starry firmament, of a moon reflected in the waves, upon a vessel that is cleaving the sea, to shut one's self up in a little wooden cage, where frequently one is stifled with the heat! During the heaviest showers, the most boisterous gales, I keep my place upon deck, leaning against the mast, wrapped in my cloak. I admire the Lord in the torrent that inundates me, as I admired him on land in the dew-drop, which, at dawn of day, refreshed the flower of spring.

16th and 17th. Fair weather.

18th. We are passing Corfu; on the 19th, Zante.

20th. We are in sight of Candia; wind fair, and weather just such as we could wish.

Never shall I forget these nights which I passed in meditation on the deck of the *Ulysses*, lighted by the silvery rays of the orb of night, with my eyes fixed on that friend of the traveller, of the unfortunate, and of every tender-hearted being, whom I had learned to love from my childhood, who has always had indescribable charms for me, when she penetrated through the gilded windows of the palaces of kings, as when in my captivity she visited me between the bars of the keep of Vincennes. What hours have I passed in contemplating her!

I meditated particularly upon the journey which God, in his mercy, permitted me to take. My heart throbbed. I should soon be in Palestine; I was going to traverse that land thickly strewed with prodigies from the most remote ages, that fertile land where Jesus lifted up that divine voice which has given a new aspect to the world. Turning my thoughts to myself, I then asked: Who am I, to be thus favoured? I am a sinner, and what sinner? a sinner who, during the greatest part of his life, has offended, reviled his Creator, his benefactor, his father, and his God; and this sinner is permitted to touch the ground over which the feet of the Saviour of the world

have passed! The lips of this sinner are about to kiss the manger, the sepulchre, and that blood-stained rock, where, in order to save the human race, the Son of man, the Love of Heaven, expired in excruciating torments! I am going to see Jerusalem, Bethlehem, Nazareth, Jordan, Mount Tabor, the Mount of Olives At this thought my heart burns with love and gratitude; I sink upon my knees, and I adore the thrice good God.

21st and 22d. The weather has been so fine and the wind so favourable that we have run nearly three hundred miles.

23d. We are not so fortunate to-day. Assailed by a north-north-west wind, and met by a rough sea coming with fury from the Archipelago, our most experienced seamen know not what resources to call to their aid. The wind roars among the rigging; we have but one small sail left, and how easily that may be torn in pieces! The waves dash with violence against our vessel. The Ulysses is become the object of their fury.

There is a saying that if the impious man learns to pray anywhere, it is at sea. This I can comprehend, especially in one of those awful nights, without any light save the frequent flash, when the cries of the sailors are blended with the roaring of the thunder and of the angry billows. Alarmed at his situation, the unbeliever, pale and trembling, looks up to Him who can alone succour and protect. Nature, whose voice is heard in this extremity, impels him to lift up his hands in prayer—an homage which the affrighted heart always pays to the God whom it had till then forgotten.

For my part, lying upon the deck, still indisposed, fastened by a rope that I might not be swept away by some wave, I said to myself: The hand of God is impressed everywhere: I shall have the happiness to visit the Holy Land: this happiness must be purchased by sufferings, privations, and dangers. God cannot give to his friends any other lot than he gave to his divine Son. The cross is the coin in which he pays here below those who comprehend and love Him.

Suppose, for a moment, my dear friend, the tomb of our Saviour to be near Paris. There is the Seine turned

into the Jordan, Neuilly into Bethlehem, Fontainebleau into Nazareth, &c. Do you not see at once, as I do, a profane people treading disrespectfully that sacred ground, making it the theatre of their diversions, of their guilty pleasures? Do you not hear the strange conversations of the multitude, that language full of impiety, or at least of a levity not less sacrilegious, which, on the eve of a day devoted to rest by religion, are held by persons who nevertheless call themselves Christians: "We are going to-morrow by omnibus to Bethlehem; we shall go to the hotel of the Ambassadors, where you are sure of an excellent dinner; after dinner we shall go to the Manger, and we shall be back in time for the Opera"—nay, would not the irreverence, the scandal, go still further than I say, if the holy places were in France instead of being in Asia? No, no; this long peregrination full of dangers to reach the Holy Land—that Palestine in the hands of the infidels—that sacred sepulchre, guarded by feeble mortals at the peril of their lives—that Jordan, which cannot be approached without jeopardy—those scattered Christians who can only go with timid and trembling step to visit the tomb of their God: all this is marked with the seal of a God who was born in a stable, and died on a gibbet: he could do no other than surround the avenue to his birthplace and his grave with thorns and briars, privations and dangers.

24th. Still bad weather.

25th. The weather is more favourable, the ship still labouring. We have had since yesterday several charming visitors: pretty little birds, frightened by the bad weather, sought shelter in our ship; I remarked, in particular, a beautiful turtle-dove. The sailors would fain have caught it, but I was there to forbid them; and if it had been declared a good prize, I would have paid its ransom. The poor bird was a traveller, like ourselves; it had come to us in quest of an asylum: was it right that it should make a meal for a sailor, who was not in want of anything? A magistrate was expelled from Athens for having driven away a bird which took refuge in his bosom; he was a heathen, and there is something in the Christian heart that makes it feel compassion for

all the beings created by its kind Maker. We had, however, on board, a treacherous animal, the symbol of hypocrisy; I never could like it. The sailors were fond of Rosso. It must be confessed that he was particularly clever at seizing with his claws the poor birds that came to us to demand hospitality. Early in the morning, I heard exclamations of joy; I thought that we had got sight of Cyprus. A sailor handed to me the bleeding wing of the poor dove: Rosso had made it his prey. Is the heart of a cat susceptible of remorse? Rosso never durst appear in my presence again.

26th. The weather is finer, the sea less agitated. I feel better, but the latitudes in which we are sailing awaken in my heart painful recollections. I see that war of extermination, that frightful struggle between the Turks and the Greeks—a war, marked on either side by acts of cruelty and horrors, from which the imagination turns away in disgust, and which the pen refuses to record. Many a time, in passing some island, the waves seemed to bring with them fragments of human flesh and palpitating limbs; and the wind, howling among the rigging, heightens the illusion. I listen, and fancy that I hear the cries, the moans, the sighs, of the victims.

One evening I was upon deck; I was conversing about this war, about this horrible carnage, with a person who had lived in the Isle of Cyprus. He related to us a fact confirmed by the captain and the whole crew of the *Ulysses*—a fact characteristic of those times of confusion and horror, when the thirst of blood provoked the thirst of blood. Unfortunately, the Greeks proved themselves quite as barbarous as the Turks. They were oppressed; it is true; but to such a degree did they sully their cause, that we ask ourselves, in amazement, which was most atrocious, the Mussulman or the Christian.

The Greeks of the Island of Cyprus had taken no part in the insurrection. They were required to deliver up their arms; they gave them readily and submissively; they did more, they carried to Coutsciouk-Mehemet, governor of the island, a present of one hundred thousand piastres, begging him to send it to the Sublime Porte, and to procure for them a firman, which, doing justice to their

fidelity, might protect them from any vexation. That monster promised all they wished, and made them pay dearly for his promises. He called together several times the archbishop, the four bishops, and all the notables of the island; he assured them most graciously that he had just despatched a Tartar to Constantinople, that he had written in their behalf to the Sultan, that he had supported their just demand with all his influence, that he would rather die than do them the least harm; and, moreover, that he was certain that the Grand Signor would be favourable to them. The Tartar, however, did not come back with the firman. The archbishop, a man of extraordinary merit and superior understanding, who was acquainted with the villany of the governor, began to be alarmed. He went one day to Coutsciouk-Mehemet, and expressed his apprehensions. "Be easy," replied the governor, "I swear by the Koran and the great prophet that the sword shall never touch thy neck. May Allah punish me if I forswear myself."

This oath cheered the archbishop. His fears, however, were but too well founded. In hopes of possessing himself of the property of the principal Greeks of the Island of Cyprus, Coutsciouk-Mehemet had sent a report, the very reverse of what he had promised. He had described the Greek archbishop, bishops, and notables, as factious men, ready to rise against the Porte and to shake off the Ottoman yoke.

The Tartar at length returned from Constantinople. The governor sent word to the archbishop, the four bishops, and the ninety-three notables of the island, that he had received a firman which surpassed in clemency all that he could have hoped for, and he invited them to repair to Nicosia to hear it read. They went thither, not only without fear, but with joy. What was their surprise, their consternation, when the cruel Coutsciouk, appearing among them, read to them a firman, ordering them all to be put to death! How is it possible to describe this terrible scene! Some threw themselves on their knees, in a state of despair, calling upon heaven to witness their innocence; others, fired with rage, called down vengeance upon such atrocious barbarity, un-

paralleled in the annals of nations ; some uttered, in voices broken by sobs, the names of their wives and children, and commended themselves to the Father of mercies ; others attempted to flee, but escape was impossible. The archbishop advanced towards the perfidious governor, to reproach him with his crime, and to remind him of his oath. " I promised thee," replied the monster, " that the sword should not touch thy neck. I will keep my word ; thou shalt be hanged." This was the signal for the carnage.

Seated on his divan, cross-legged, his pipe in his mouth, surrounded by his satellites, Coutsciouk-Mehemet coolly pointed out to those who were to be the first victims, and laughed with his councillors at the sight of the anguish of those who awaited death. Many other Greeks were beheaded, their property confiscated, their wives and daughters imprisoned But I pause

Ought I here to place on record a thought, which, whenever I happen to be speaking of Greece, comes across my mind and saddens my heart? I know not ; but it escapes me. The Greek nation, which has always excited such a strong interest, for which all other nations have made such sacrifices, never had it at heart to prove itself truly worthy of them : and in these latter times, when it had so fair a cause to defend, it knew not how to answer the expectations that were formed of it. No doubt there are in its bosom honourable exceptions ; this, I cheerfully acknowledge, I can even myself attest ; but those who form these exceptions are too few in number to prevent me from declaring that, in spite of the fanaticism in spite of the aversion for the sciences, in spite of the despotism and the cruelty, of the Mussulman, I prefer a Turk to a Greek. For him who has studied the character of both nations, and has observed them closely, it is unnecessary to justify this preference.

27th. The captain of the *Ulysses*, as I have already remarked, is an excellent man ; but he combines some superstition with his originality. Yesterday evening, he was in a particularly good humour. We were in sight of Cyprus ; the wind was most favourable, and we were advancing at a rapid rate. I went up to him and

asked when we were likely to arrive at Larnaca, where we were to land, if the wind should continue as it then was. He gave me no answer ; I repeated my question ; he seemed vexed, looked black, and replied : " It is wrong to ask such questions ; they bring ill luck. I could not help smiling, but held my tongue. In the night, the wind became contrary : I perceived it immediately. This morning, at dawn, when I went upon deck, the captain came to me, and said, with an angry look, turning at the same time towards this unlucky wind : " That is your doing, father ! " I had a good mind to answer like the idle schoolboy, whose master peevishly asked him : " Who made the heavens and the earth ? " and who cried out, all in tears ; " I did, I did ; but will I never do so any more. " The contrary wind continued the whole day.

28th. The wind rather more favourable.

29th. A good wind. At three o'clock we were off Larnaca. We were just about to enter the road, when a sanitary boat came and brought us the melancholy intelligence that the cholera was making frightful havoc at Alexandria, and throughout all Egypt and Syria, and that all intercourse with those countries was broken off. We came from Venice ; but we could not obtain permission to land without proving that we had had no communication with any other vessel, while at sea.

This evening we came to an anchor ; we were regular, and were allowed to land. To make me forget his little whims, the captain hoisted, with the Austrian flag, that of Jerusalem, which he had on board by the greatest of accidents ; he proposed even to salute me with all his guns at the moment of going ashore. I had great difficulty to prevail upon him to abstain from so silly an act, which would have thrown ridicule both on himself and on me, a poor Trappist.

I wrote immediately to the Austrian consul, M. Antonio Caprara ; I sent him the letters of recommendation that I had for him ; I begged him to inform the Franciscan friars of the Holy Land of my arrival, and to say that I wished to lodge with them.

September 30th. I landed, and called upon the Aus-

trian consul, who took me in his carriage to Larnaca, and introduced me to his wife, his children, his chancellor and his drogmans. I then went to the convent of the Franciscan friars, who received me with religious humility and charity.

I cannot tell you, my dear friend, what a consolation I feel on finding myself again in a monastery. I cannot tire of sadly contemplating those long cloisters, half in ruins, those arms of Jerusalem on all the walls, those monks far away from their native land, beneath a sultry sky, singing the praises of the Lord, among Turks, Greeks, and Arabs.

The Turks of this country respect the Pilgrims, whom they call *hadji*. I wear my religious habit, an object of curiosity to the multitude, though they never think of annoying me or turning me into derision. These good Turks are not yet sufficiently advanced in civilization, to know how offensive the dresses peculiar to the religious orders are to the enlightenment of the present day. I let my beard grow, according to the custom of the monks.

Though this is the 30th of September, the sun is scorching, the fields parched up, and quite white. The few shrubs that are to be seen are covered with dust, and the country, of a whitish hue, looks dull and monotonous. You perceive, at the first glance, that everything here is Asiatic; everything strikes the European who is here for the first time. You meet, every moment, long files of camels, driven by Arabs and Turks, on foot or on horseback, armed cap-a-pie, and veiled women, no part of whom is to be seen but their eyes.

La Marina and Larnaca are two towns, if towns they may be called, which, as it were, adjoin one another. Nothing can be meaner or duller; they begin to give you an idea of the towns of the Levant: paltry mud-built houses, with terraces—that is all. I found them almost deserted. A great number of inhabitants had fled to the mountains, since the appearance of the cholera morbus, which is believed to have been introduced into the island through the criminal conduct of the consul-general of Tuscany, at Alexandria. He fled, himself,

from the scourge that was ravaging Egypt ; and that no obstacle might be opposed to his landing, he omitted to declare the death of his secretary and of several sailors, who had expired during the passage. When the trick was discovered, he was forced to embark again. But the panic was the greater, inasmuch as several other clandestine landings had been effected at different points by crews coming from Syria, where the cholera was making rapid ravages. Damascus, Jaffa, St. Jean d'Acre, and Jerusalem, have lost, I am told, a prodigious number of their inhabitants.

You will assuredly, my dear friend, not expect me to repeat to you what the island of Cyprus was for pagan antiquity, or that I should tell you of the infamous goddess to whom it was consecrated, of the festivals held in honour of that goddess, and of the impure worship paid to her at Paphos and Amathonte, by a people addicted to voluptuousness and sunk in debauchery. A pilgrim, on his way to visit the tomb of the Messiah, turns his thoughts from such scenes, and leaves the delineation of them to that class of poets, whose wanton Muse blushes not to celebrate in her verses the most culpable excesses of the mind, the most disgraceful propensities of the heart. Instead of such details, I will tell you at least in a few words what may be more interesting to you, in regard to religion and history, since the commencement of the Christian era.

The island of Cyprus, situated between the coast of Syria and Cilicia, now Caramania, is the most considerable island in this part of the Mediterranean. In the year 44, of Christ, St. Paul and St. Barnabas went thither to promulgate the Gospel ; they preached at first at Salamis, in the synagogues of the Jews, and then proceeded to the other towns. At Paphos, St. Paul converted the proconsul, Sergius Paulus, by striking blind the false prophet Bar Jesu, who opposed his preaching. Some years afterwards, St. Barnabas, who is believed to be the first bishop of Cyprus, was stoned at Salamis by the Jews, and died a martyr. The body of the apostle was discovered in the sequel near that place. In the coffin was found a copy of the Gospel of St. Matthew, in Hebrew,

written with the saint's own hand. It was sent, in 485, to the emperor Zeno.

After forming several kingdoms, tributary to Egypt and the Roman empire, Cyprus fell under the dominion of the emperors of the West and of Constantinople. It was long in the possession of Isaac I., of the family of the Comnenes. Richard I., of England, having conquered it, sold it to the Templars, who gave it up again to Richard, and by him it was at length ceded to Guy de Lusignan. Charlotte, the last heiress of that family, was driven from it by her natural brother James. She married Louis of Savoy ; and hence it is that the kings of Sardinia still take the title of king of Cyprus. After the death of James, Cornara, his wife, having no male issue, disposed of the island in 1480 to the republic of Venice. In 1570, the Turks made themselves masters of it, and are still its possessors.

The island of Cyprus is two hundred and twenty miles in length, sixty-five in breadth, and about six hundred in circumference. It is crossed from west to east by a range of mountains, the loftiest of which are Olympus, and Santa Croce. Famagousta, Nicosia, and Larnaca, are the only important towns in the island, which is otherwise celebrated for its fertility. What a pity that it does not belong to a European sovereign ! . . . Under the dominion of the Porte, and under the blood-suckers, called governors of the island, it is falling entirely to decay. "Every day," says a celebrated traveller on this subject, "some new tax is devised ; and, after fattening on the substance of the people, after enriching the agents of his cruelties, this governor retires, laden with gold and curses, to make room for another, who surpasses his predecessor in rapine and oppression."

A few moments before my departure from Fribourg, the bishop of Lausanne committed to my charge a letter and a donation, which the Visitandine sisters of that city wished to transmit to a monastery of their order. "How happy our sisters would be," said the prelate, "if you could yourself execute this commission !" "You shall be obeyed, monseigneur," I immediately replied. I supposed that this commission was for some town in

Switzerland or Savoy. I looked at the address, and read : *To the Superior of the Visitandines, at Antoura, on Mount Lebanon, in Asia.* What was my surprise ! “ Monseigneur,” I exclaimed, “ let Antoura be ever so far distant, with the blessing of God, your commission shall be fulfilled” In fact, till my arrival in Cyprus, I hoped myself to be the bearer of the alms of the good sisters of Fribourg ; but here I am all at once stopped short. It has pleased God that the disease with which he is now visiting the world should, for the moment, render it impossible for me to approach that land in which I so ardently long to shed tears of love and gratitude : all the communications with those regions of death are now cut off. Alas ! when I think that he did not permit the pious leader of Israel to enter the land of promise, ought not I to tremble ! But, once more, blessed be his will, ever just, ever adorable ! And if he decrees that the hand which is writing these lines should in a few hours be cold and stiff, still blessed be his name !

I experience here, my dear friend, what several Europeans have done on coming to this country, a general indisposition, an inconceivable debility ; on some days I can scarcely ascend the stairs that lead to my apartment ; and to all this is surperadded a complaint, which in Egypt is called the *Nile Flower*—a sort of leprosy, which covers me from head to foot. On looking at myself, I fancy that I am like that man of immense sufferings, the pious Job : happy could I but share his patience as I share his afflictions !

I have this moment received the melancholy tidings that the viceroy of Egypt is marching against the Pacha of Acre, whose pachalik extends over all Palestine. Poor Palestine ! Jerusalem then will in a few weeks fall a prey to the Egyptian army, which will bring all the calamities of war in its train ! My situation is the more unpleasant, inasmuch as I am engrossed by but one thought, and that is continually directed towards that sacred land, the end and aim of my journey. However, my friend, in my dictionary the word *fear* is struck out of the number of those that I keep for my use ; besides, I have often found by experience that courage consists in attempt-

ing, and that danger flees from him who confronts it. I shall therefore endeavour, in spite of the advanced and perilous season, in spite of a thousand other obstacles, to get across, and, for want of a ship, in some Arab bark, that will land me on the coast of Palestine, fifty or sixty leagues from this place.

Here is a very long letter, my dear friend. You will easily perceive, from the nature of the details, and the reflections which accompany them, that it was not the work of a single day. While waiting for an opportunity to despatch it, I have taken up the pen again and again, whenever anything likely to interest you occurred to my mind. Farewell. Pray for me. My next letter to you will come, unless God should order it otherwise, from the opposite coast.

LETTER XI.

Paralysis—Dangerous Symptoms—Attentions of the Consul, the Fathers of the Holy Land and the Physicians—Convalescence—Pictures presented by the Empress Maria Theresa—Renegadoes—Plague—Departure for Jaffa.

Larnaca, November 25th, 1831.

MAN proposes, and God disposes, my dear friend. It has pleased him, in his infinite mercy, to strike me with paralysis. The right side and the head have been affected; the right eye, the cheek, and the mouth, have been wholly deprived of their natural motions. I could not speak, eat, or drink, without great difficulty. It was in the night that I perceived that my face had undergone a great change. I rose, and soon had the melancholy conviction that I was paralytic. What alarmed me most was that right eye, in spite of me constantly open, motionless, fixed stedfastly on me, and seeming to say: "No Palestine now, for thee: thou must die." However another part had not suffered; the brain was untouched.

I must confess that at first I experienced a painful feeling, on seeing myself thus disfigured. However, God

inspired me with the idea to go to the church, in order to offer to him this disease, in a spirit of penitence; and, if I recollect rightly, I recited the *Te Deum*. Greek physicians were sent for; they assured me that bleeding was urgently necessary. I refused to submit to it, having, I know not why, an invincible aversion to that operation, especially in a hot climate, and in a season when the heat was still oppressive. But the superior of the monastery, seeing that I was in the greatest danger, said to me, in a severe tone: "Father, I order you to suffer yourself to be bled." I then obeyed, without hesitation, and it is said that this saved me.

I shall never forget the evening of the following day. I was in great pain, and, to bodily sufferings were added those of the mind, because I dreaded the progress of the paralysis; and then, how could I help recollecting that I was six hundred leagues from my country, and from all that was dear to me! I was, nevertheless, not forsaken; for all the Fathers of the Holy Land surrounded my sick bed, and administered all sorts of consolations. But, O new affliction! a Portuguese monk caught my eye, and he seemed to announce, by repeated signs, that it was all over with me. However, in a faint voice, and scarcely capable of articulating a few broken words, I thanked the community for the interest that it had manifested for a poor pilgrim; I commended myself to its prayers, and I made some dispositions, in case of death. My thoughts were chiefly turned towards the manger, where Eternal Love submitted to be born, towards Golgotha, towards the holy sepulchre, and, when I reflected that, in all probability, I should never behold those places so dear to my heart, my eyes filled with tears.

What a fine study would that spacious chamber, lighted by a single lamp, have offered to a painter! that chamber, where, stretched on a divan, in my white habit of La Trappe, I was surrounded by those good monks, whose very dark dress strongly contrasted with mine. Their long beards, their hands folded over their bosoms, and that expression of countenance, in which charity was stamped in each of their features, presented an exact likeness of the ancient anchorets.

During my illness; all the consuls were assiduous in their attentions, and especially M. Caprara, the Austrian consul. The Greek physicians who attended me were indefatigable.

I cannot express what I felt the first time I was allowed to go down into the garden. I thank thee, O my guardian angel! thou knowest if I was intoxicated with delight, on perceiving that I was able to continue my pilgrimage. Yes, to me, that thought was full of rapture; it poured into my soul torrents of ineffable joy.

In one of my rooms where I generally sit, and which is called the room of the divans, because it is surrounded with them, I have two pictures of very large dimensions; one of them representing St. Francis of Assisi, the other, St. Antony of Padua. Underneath these pictures are the arms of Austria, with the letters M. T. They were a present from Maria Theresa, from that princess, whose soul, greater than even her vast dominions, delighted in dispensing benefits, even in the most distant countries; who astonished the world by her piety, as much as by her courage, and who, surrounded by grandeur and magnificence, took pleasure in humbling before the Eternal King her august head, on which so many crowns shed their radiance, never forgetting that, though an empress, she was but dust and ashes; of that sovereign, in short, whose heart was constantly open to the petitions of her subjects, and whose name was always a name of blessing and of love. A beautiful clock, which stands at the door of my chamber, was also a gift from the same empress.

I shall soon have been two months at Cyprus, my dear friend. Since my convalescence, I frequently ride out on horseback, to explore the environs, but my favourite resort is the sea-shore. Thither I never go without tarrying a long time, with my eyes turned towards the land, after which I sigh, and which is the object of all my wishes.

Here you unfortunately meet with several renegadoes, who became Turks at the time of the massacres; some, to save their lives; others, that they might be able to trade more freely. To forsake, to deny, one's God, from fear of death, is a horrible thing, no doubt; but to deny him, to abjure him, in cold blood, from no other motive

than sordid interest, is the basest of infamy. If, at the corner of a narrow street, I chanced to meet a cart, laden with corpses of persons infected with the plague, and it was impossible for me to avoid the contact with it, I should feel less alarm, less horror, than at the sight of a renegado.

Our monastery has been kept shut for a fortnight, on account of a rumour of the plague, which was added to the terror caused by the cholera. I could not help smiling at the earnestness with which the good Fathers observed certain petty precautions, at the same time that they neglected others of far greater importance. On the one hand, nothing was admitted without a strict purification; long pincers, vinegar, were always ready; not a potato was taken in till it had been dipped twenty times in water; on the other, ten cats, belonging to the house, went in and out at pleasure, and were liable every moment to introduce the distemper. One day, having myself cried out to the porter, who was opening the door for a dog: "Father Genipert, what are you about? beware of the plague;" he replied, with the utmost ingenuousness: "But surely our poor Castor must not go without his dinner!" Castor was not turned out till yesterday. Such inconsistency on the part of these good Fathers enables one to account for the death of all the monks of the monastery of St. Jean d'Acre. These latter, however, if they showed equal imprudence in regard to the means of external communication, the sole preservative against the plague, displayed an heroic charity, by mutually nursing one another, in spite of the danger of death, which of course they could not thus escape. From the position of the corpses, it was to be inferred that the two Fathers, who were the last victims, had expired nearly at the same moment: one was stretched beside the bed of the other, holding in his hand a cup, which indicated that he was handing something to his dying brother. Probably their spirits appeared together before God, to receive the recompense of their charity.

P.S. Blessed be the God of mercy! I am this moment informed that a Turkish schooner is to sail the day after to-morrow for Jaffa; I shall endeavour to secure a passage in her, cost what it may.

LETTER XII.

Turkish Schooner, the *Elpis* (Hope)—The Captain; the Crew—Moustapha, the Captain's Son—Impatience to descry the Holy Land—Pilgrims on board—Young Greek Woman and her Children—View of the Coast of Palestine—Jaffa; its dangerous Road; Landing—Monastery of the Fathers of the Holy Land—Wreck of the Turkish Schooner—Jaffa taken by Ibrahim Pacha—M^r. Mostras, Russian Consul—Veiled Women—Franciscan Fathers and their Convents in Asia and Africa.

Jaffa, December 3d, 1831.

I HAVE just arrived at this town, my dear friend, on board the Turkish schooner, *Elpis* (Hope), commanded by Captain Hussien. We had a most agreeable passage; not that the wind was always the most favourable, but we had most splendid weather, very seasonably for me; for the cabin is a sort of kennel where you can scarcely stand upright, and where the stench is insupportable. I never lay down to rest but upon deck, without any other bed than a carpet and a blanket. Had I not taken the precaution to buy these indispensable articles for my voyage in Cyprus, I should frequently have found myself obliged to lie on the bare boards.

Whoever has not been the inmate of a Turkish vessel cannot form any correct idea of one: nay, the most accurate description would fall short of the reality. Our captain, squatted on cushions, slept or smoked. The Greek sailors, to the number of five or six, gamed, amused themselves, or played tricks with one another. The most intelligent of the whole crew was Moustapha, the captain's son, a fine boy, seven or eight years old, with a prepossessing face, having an expression of extraordinary candour and honesty. He was the little steward: it was he who had charge of the provisions, and he performed that duty with peculiar grace and cleverness. The very day that I went on board, this boy interested me by action worthy of remark. He was eating, and, having dropped a morsel of bread, he picked it up with respect, raised it thrice to his forehead, then to his mouth, at the same time lifting his eyes to heaven, as much as to say that he knew the value of the food which

God in his bounty was pleased to bestow on him. Poor boy ! said I frequently to myself, as I looked at him, what a pity that thou art not a Christian !

Moustapha was cabin-boy also. Nothing was more curious than to see him climb to the mast-head with the lightness and agility of a squirrel : to descend, he glided down by a rope with frightful rapidity.

It was a curious sight, too, to see him at the helm ; he then assumed a look of gravity, which formed a singular contrast with his age. The whole crew admired him. For my part I did not like to see him at that post, which the seamen occasionally relinquish to him, either from indolence, or in compliance with his request, and with a view to obtain from him, as steward, a larger portion of beans or biscuit. But if Moustapha was a most amiable boy, he was also a most artful one. Perceiving my impatience to get sight of the Holy Land, he took it into his head one day to ascend the mast and to shout " Land ! land !" At that word every one rose, for there were other pilgrims on board ; they looked, they rubbed their eyes, they looked again, but not a creature could descry anything, except Moustapha, who with his little turban in his hand, went round from pilgrim to pilgrim to beg a *bakshisch*, that is, a gratuity for his good news, which every one cheerfully gave him with a smile, convinced that it was one of his tricks.

During the first days, we steered without compass. On my most peremptory demand, one was brought and soon furnished subject for dispute. The fact was that we were out of our track. It was mortifying. Luckily, we had, as I have told you, magnificent weather, though a contrary wind. To give you some idea of the confusion that prevailed on board, I must tell you, my dear friend, that, on the second day, having desired to have some eggs boiled for my dinner, I was told that there was no wood, because the clerk had forgot to procure some in Cyprus These people, no doubt, imagined that, as a Trappist pilgrim, the hope of soon descrying the country towards which all my thoughts were bent, to which all my affections were directed, would not

only nourish my soul, but support my body. I bore it patiently.

The night of the 1st of December was one of ravishing beauty. A gentle calm pervaded the air; the sky presented a veil sprinkled with diamonds. The waves sported about our schooner. The wife who is expecting a beloved husband, whom she has not seen for a long time; the mother, who every moment fancies that she hears the step of a son whom she longs to see again after murderous wars; the young damsel who is going to be married, and is waiting the arrival of him who is to conduct her to the altar, and to vow to her everlasting love—feel not more eager impatience than I did to see the Holy Land. The pilgrims on board shared that impatience. A young Greek woman, from the environs of Constantinople, who was going to Jerusalem with her husband and three little children, kept continually upon deck. One of these children was still at the breast. The two others were incessantly asking her questions, and she pointed to the distance, beyond the sea . . . and, standing on tiptoe with their little feet, they looked with all their eyes, without ceasing to chat and to question their mother, who seemed to me to be always talking to them about God. At length, at daybreak we perceived Palestine! We sunk upon our knees, with our eyes fixed on that land, which the Saviour of the world has filled with his mysteries and covered with his prodigies! At seven in the morning, we were off Cæsarea; on the left, in the distance, rose Mount Carmel. I had before me the coast of Palestine; it looks miserably dull.

In the evening, we came to an anchor off Jaffa. It is a town built amphitheatrically, of very sombre aspect. Its first name was Joppa, and so it is called in Scripture, in which it is frequently mentioned. Some profane authors have asserted that it was thus named from Jope, daughter of Eolus and wife of Cepheus. It is commonly believed to be one of the most ancient towns in the world, and to owe its foundation to Japhet, the second son of Noah. It was there that Jonah embarked to go to Tarsus. Hiram, king of Tyre, sent thither ships laden with timber and marble, to be forwarded to Solomon for the construction

of the Temple. St. Peter dwelt there when he had a vision relative to Cornelius, and when he revived Tabitha. Josephus relates that the Romans utterly demolished this town during the siege of Jerusalem.

The road of Jaffa is very dangerous, and much dreaded by navigators, who must always be upon their guard.

Yesterday morning, at daybreak, boats put off and surrounded the vessel, to take us to the town, the access to which is difficult on account of the numerous rocks that present to view their bare flanks. The walls were covered with spectators, attracted by curiosity. The boats being much lower than the bridge upon which one is obliged to climb, and having no ladder, the landing is not effected without danger. More than once it has happened that passengers, in springing out, have broken their limbs, and we might have met with the like accident, if several persons had not hastened to our assistance. The apathetic indolence of the Turkish administration witnesses all this without applying a remedy.

No sooner had I landed than, notwithstanding the crowd drawn together around me by the strangeness of my costume, I knelt down to kiss that sacred soil to which God, in his mercy, had brought me in so miraculous a manner. The Turks and the soldiers of the viceroy of Egypt, great numbers of whom were there, much as they might be astonished at my conduct, showed not the least sign of disapprobation; nay, several of them, apparently comprehending its motive, gave me tokens of respect: the word, *hadji*, pilgrim, was heard on all sides. Meanwhile, as the crowd kept increasing, the dragomans of the Fathers of the Holy Land of Jaffa, who had been sent to meet me, cleared the way, and, walking before me, conducted me to the monastery. I begged, before I did anything else, to be taken to the church. I then carried my letters of recommendation to the superior, and visited the other Fathers, who received me kindly and politely. The nephew of cardinal Don Emmanuel Cantillo Jovellanos, archbishop of Toledo, a young priest of the Holy Land, gave up his chamber to me. The monastery had just been rebuilt with materials brought

from Cæsarea. O, Providence of my God! those stones which had been used by Herod to found a town in honour of Augustus now served to build a temple to the child whose birth had filled him with such alarm, and whom he purposed to destroy. Though entirely new-built, the monastery of Jaffa, which has cost a great deal of money, is like all the monasteries of the Holy Land: it exhibits the appearance of a fortress, of a castle of the tenth century; a heap of stones piled one upon another, and that is all.

The cell which I occupy looks out upon the sea. Long did I linger at my window, contemplating that superb but treacherous element, the bond of the two worlds, which its roaring billows would engulph, if the mighty hand of God had not placed a barrier to it in the grain of sand, which he has commanded to stop it. I looked with a feeling of pleasure, and a sort of gratitude, at the frail vessel which had conveyed me to Palestine. Such is the way with man; a passenger in this great vale of tears, he suffers his soul and his immortal affections to cling to everything that surrounds and is close to him

.. Alas! never was I to behold that vessel again: a few hours afterwards she struck upon the rocks, which render the road of Jaffa so dangerous. She was completely wrecked; the crew were saved, after having undergone all the horrors of death. Had I continued on board a few moments longer, I too might perhaps have by this time been no more. At the moment that I am writing these lines, the Fathers of the Holy Land would probably have been employed in removing my body, extended on the beach; and after a few hours passed in the church, amidst funereal chants, they would have carried it to its last home. The Arab, on seeing the procession, would have inquired whom they were interring. "We know not," would have been the reply of one of the Fathers; "it is a pilgrim from the vessel that has just been wrecked; from his dress he appears to be a monk." And the cold earth would have covered me, the while not one friend would have stood beside my grave, not one tear would have dropped upon my coffin; and, upon the little mound of dust, formed by my mortal remains, never would there

have been seen the print of the knee of a creature that had loved me !

At the time of our arrival, Jaffa, as you may have inferred from what I have previously said, was in the power of the viceroy of Egypt. Ibrahim Pacha, the son of that prince, had taken it some days before by a stratagem, the idea of which had been suggested to him by an unexpected circumstance, and which he had carried into execution with equal skill and promptitude. He was going with some ships to attack St. Jean d'Acre ; as he was passing Jaffa, a number of persons belonging to that town took it into their heads to put off and visit him. But no sooner were they on board than, profiting by the occasion, he ordered the pilots who had brought them to be seized, and forced them to steer some of the ships of war, and to effect during the night the landing of fifteen hundred men, who immediately made themselves masters of the place. Taken unawares, the soldiers of the Pacha of St. Jean d'Acre fled without fighting.

There is at Jaffa a Russian consul, M. Mostros, a very amiable man, who is kept there by his sovereign solely to afford assistance to the pilgrims of his nation.

Nothing can be more beautiful or more fertile than the gardens around the town. The lemon and orange trees, the fruit of which is in high repute, are in such profusion that the leaves scarcely allow you to discern the stems and the branches which support them.

Here it is that the traveller begins to meet with women completely veiled. When I say veiled, I mean not that kind of veil which descends from the head to the waist, but a sort of black or yellowish-green covering, drawn so close over the face as to suffer nothing but the marks of the nose, chin, and cheeks to be perceived: of the mouth and eyes you see no traces. It is frightful, it is horrible, to a European not accustomed to this sight. I met in a street a party of these phantom women, whose notice was attracted by my Trappist habit. I shuddered on finding myself surrounded by such figures ; I could not help thinking of the witches in Macbeth They are all thickly clothed; they throw over them, when they go abroad, a large piece of white cotton, which covers

them from head to foot, and with which they form a graceful drapery. With this they wear boots, generally yellow; which, by their capaciousness, perfectly correspond with all the rest. I know not to what to compare a Turkish woman, accoutred in this fashion: by her head she is like a spectre, and by the rest of her body she resembles a walking barrel, set up on two thick pieces of timber. The women of the lowest class fasten a dirty rag over the nose and mouth, leaving only the eyes, which are very often sore, uncovered. . . . But what am I about, my friend? Am I not going out of my way to notice things so foreign to the object of my travels? The disagreeable impression which they have made upon me has caused me to forget that I am in the Holy Land, and has, I may say, in spite of myself, diverted my thoughts for a moment from the happiness that awaits me.

I set out to-morrow for Rama, and shall thence proceed to Jerusalem.

A few words more. The monastery which I am about to leave is inhabited by Spanish Franciscan Fathers only, who, with the Italians, are charged with the service of the monasteries of Palestine in general. The Father warden of the tomb of our Saviour, who is highest in dignity, must always be an Italian; the vicar, who is next to him, was always a Frenchman; but, since the suppression of the monastic orders in France, that office is given alternately to Spaniards and Italians. The third high office, and perhaps the most important, is that of procurator: it embraces the temporal concerns of the monasteries of the Holy Land, and can be conferred only on a Spaniard. The convents occupied by the Franciscan Fathers, in Asia and Africa, are those of Jerusalem, Rama, St. Jean d'Acre, Jaffa, Larnaca, Nicosia, Bethlehem, St. John of the Desert, Nazareth, Sidon, Tripoli in Syria, Alexandria, Cairo, Mount Lebanon, Damascus and Aleppo.

At Jerusalem, Bethlehem, and Nazareth, the Fathers are of the two nations; at Jaffa, Rama, St. John of the Desert, and Damascus, the Fathers are exclusively Spaniards. The other places are served by the Italians.

Adieu, my dear Charles, adieu.

LETTER XIII.

Departure from Jaffa—Unpleasant riding—Adventure in the Market-place—Splendid Weather—Cattle—Rama—Monastery—Cistern of St. Helena—Tower of the Forty Martyrs.

Rama, December 5th, 1831.

I SET out yesterday afternoon from Jaffa, with a guide, a mule for myself, and two asses for my baggage: I brought away, among other things, a sack of potatoes. This may appear strange to you ; but as I never eat meat, as there are few culinary vegetables in Palestine, and as the fruit season is over, I must make some provision for my numerous excursions.

I cannot tell you how much I was alarmed on seeing that the mule on which I was to perform the journey from Jaffa hither had, instead of saddle, a prodigious bag full of I know not what, spliced cords for stirrups, and a chain fastened round his neck for a bridle. I scolded, I intreated, I promised money, but to no purpose ; I was obliged to clamber up to my wretched seat, and to keep my legs so wide apart, that I arrived with my back almost broken. How shall I get from this place to Jerusalem ! Twelve or fourteen hours more on such a steed, and upon dreadful roads—what will become of me ! But I am forgetting myself . . . I am complaining ! . . . And is it on the way to Jerusalem that a Christian, a monk, a Trappist, should complain at the idea of a hardship !

In leaving Jaffa, I lost my guide, and strayed into a square where a market was held, and where the numerous dealers had spread oranges, glasses, pots, and various other wares upon the ground. About the eatables in particular I observed a great number of Turks, Arabs, and Egyptian soldiers, who were easily known by their red dress, and many women and children ; all these groups were intermixed with asses and camels, in such a manner as not to leave a passage ; and I, on my sorry mule without bridle, hemmed in among the populace, inquired, in Italian, if any one had seen my guide, and which was the way to Rama ; but they laughed at me

The sellers, too near whom I was coming, and who already saw my mule's hoofs among their commodities, set up loud cries; everybody shoved me; the little Arabs pelted me: in short, I was in a situation the more unpleasant, inasmuch as the least impatience, the least violence, on my part, might have led to disastrous consequences. However, I soon perceived a Turk, in whom I had probably excited some pity, coming towards me: without saying a word to me, he seized my mule by the chain, and clearing a way, at the same time showing little mercy to the young Bedouins, he led me to the gate through which I had to pass in order to reach the Rama road. There I found my guide and my baggage I must do justice to the Egyptian soldiers: they behaved very well, and did not even indulge in a smile. In general, soldiers, even though ill-trained and ill-clothed, have a sort of discipline that is easily perceived.

The weather was brilliant, and reminded me of the beautiful spring days of Italy. The plain of Sharon, which I traversed, so extolled in Scripture, was enamelled with flowers. In this beautiful plain you perceive, from time to time, some mean hamlets. I passed near one of them; it was surrounded by innumerable herds of cows, flocks of sheep, and above all, of black goats of extraordinary beauty. Their long pendent ears are particularly remarkable. I do not recollect to have seen so great a quantity of cattle near any village in Europe: they reminded me of the flocks of Abraham, of Lot, and of Jacob. It was in this plain that Sampson burned the corn of the Philistines: foxes are very common there.

The nearer I approached to Jerusalem, the more my heart throbbed. I was glad to arrive on Saturday evening at Rama, that I might pass the Sunday there, and prepare myself for the memorable day of my entry into the Holy City—the fairest and happiest day of my life!

Rama, nearly on the borders of the plain of Sharon, is in a delightful situation. The town is very ill built. The houses, of gray stone, look like large sheds; the streets are horrible: in rainy weather, you cannot take four steps without getting up to your knees in mud. To reach the place, I passed through a forest of nopals, of

immense extent. I alighted at the house of the Fathers of the Holy Land, where I was very kindly received, though it was late.

The monastery is built on the site of the house of Nicodemus, to whom the church is dedicated. Its only inmates are two Spanish Fathers and a lay-brother.

This morning, after service, I went to see the cistern constructed by direction of St. Helena, mother of Constantine. You descend into it by about thirty steps: the interior is very spacious; it contains twenty-four arcades, formerly adorned with fine paintings, which time has almost effaced. Palestine is full of monuments, which attest the piety and charity of that illustrious princess.

At the distance of a short quarter of a league is the Tower of the Forty Martyrs, from the top of which you have a magnificent view. This tower, which produces a very good effect, is falling to ruin. It is surrounded with cloisters of handsome architecture belonging to a monastery, the name of which has slipped my memory.

I reckoned upon leaving to-day; but the weather, hitherto so fine, has suddenly changed: it has been raining all night. My guide, like all the Turks, is not fond of getting wet: he has not come for me, though I expected him with the beasts. Of course I cannot start till to-morrow. The most contradictory reports are circulated respecting the greater or less degree of safety upon the roads between this place and Jerusalem. Some assert that there is no danger whatever; others say that Arabs, taking advantage of the anarchy prevailing in Palestine, now in a manner without master, are infesting the roads, and adding murder and massacre to robbery and plunder. I shall know more about it to-morrow.

LETTER XIV.

Departure from Rama—Mountains of Judea—Village of Jeremiah—Abou Gosh—Bedouins—Mount of Olives—Jerusalem—Entry into the Holy City—Church of St. Saviour—Franciscan Fathers—Foot-washing—Cell—First Night in Jerusalem—Terrace of the Monastery—View from it—Via Dolorosa—Pilate's Prætorium—The Gate Bab-el-Sidi-Mariam—Spot where Stephen was stoned—Garden of Gethsemane—The Brook Cedron—Olive Trees—Grotto of the Agony—Place where Judas betrayed his Master—Festival of the Conception—Magnificence of the Church—Visits to the principal Fathers.

Jerusalem, December 8th, 1831.

THE day before yesterday, at five in the morning, redoubled knocks at the gate of the monastery intimated to me the arrival of my guide. Day was beginning to dawn, when I mounted a horse. The guide rode upon an ass, and my baggage was carried by a mule. I was dressed in my Trappist habit; for, as I have already had occasion to tell you, in this land of infidels, a monk may do what he would not dare to do in countries calling themselves Christian. A wooden cross and a chaplet hung at my side. To my shame be it said, I should not have been sorry to add to them the sword that I formerly wore. The sky was cloudy. The thoughts of that city where everything reminds you of the Saviour of the world, filled my soul more than ever, and wholly engrossed me. I had before me the hills of Judea, which I was two hours and a half in reaching, after having crossed an unequal and uncultivated plain. These hills, at first very low, gradually increase in height, and present but a stern and gloomy aspect. They are rocks piled amphitheatrically one upon another, on the flanks of which you perceive nought save a few olive-trees and some oaks, that look as though scathed by lightning.

As for roads, there is not a trace of any—nothing but stones that roll under your feet. Fortunately, the horses and mules of the country are so accustomed to them that they seldom trip, even in the most difficult places. When arrived at a certain height, I turned about towards the south, to look at that beautiful plain of Sharon and the

sea which bounds it ; my eye, saddened by the sterility of the soil, needed that relief.

Between Rama and Jerusalem you pass through a village called Jeremiah. There you have to pay a duty, or rather a forced contribution, to the chief of an Arab tribe, who might, without any violation of charity, be termed a chief of banditti. His name is Ibrahim Abou Gosh. He has succeeded his brother, Ibals el Rouman; who was the terror of the country, and died a few months since, while returning from Mecca. As some travellers had recently been plundered and their guide murdered, it was not without some alarm that I approached this place, especially when I found that I was obliged to pass through about thirty Arabs lying on the ground, whose turbans I had not perceived till within pistol-shot of them.

As we advanced, the more arid became the mountains and the more difficult the roads. We proceeded between whitish rocks, perceiving here and there only a little pale grass, for which some goats were fighting, and leafless bushes, whose roots were exposed to view. Hideous-looking Bedouins, scantily covered with rags, passed us from time to time, some on foot, others on horseback and armed. My dress seemed to surprise them much : they stopped and looked steadfastly at me. In some narrow passes, I was so close to them that we almost touched one another. My guide had some moments of uneasiness.

We had ceased to ascend, we were traversing a stony plain ; it began to rain very fast, and we had before us one of the finest rainbows that I have ever seen. Its brightness served only to render the objects on which it was reflected still more dull and dreary.

It was four o'clock—the Holy City could not be far distant. My heart throbbed ; I breathed with difficulty : I fancied that, in every eminence which met my view, I beheld the walls of the Holy City. Perceiving a tower and a few houses, I exclaimed, "There it is !" but my guide informed me that it was the Mount of Olives. At that word, which calls forth in the pious spirit such touching recollections, I took off my hat in deep emotion ; my eyes filled with tears. I advanced bareheaded a quarter of an hour elapsed. Oh ! how long it

was ! . . . All at once, in ecstasy, voiceless and palpitating with felicity, I flung myself from my horse, and, my brow bowed in the dust, I adored Jesus Christ, the son of the living God, the Saviour of the world—I had seen Jerusalem !

It wanted five minutes of five o'clock when I entered the Holy City, barefoot, by the gate of the Well-Beloved (Bab el Kzazil) ; at a quarter after five I was in the church of the Saviour, paying my adorations to him. The Franciscan Fathers received me with a charity worthy of him of whose tomb they are the keepers.

I delivered my letters of recommendation to the reverend Father Francis of the Grotto, warden of the holy sepulchre, to whom I was particularly recommended, agreeably to an order from his holiness, by the Propaganda at Rome. After my feet had been washed and I had taken some refreshment, I was conducted to my cell, opposite to that of the reverend Father. I needed rest ; I was harassed ; my body had suffered, and my soul had received impressions which no language can describe. Still I could not sleep ; if at times I did doze off, I soon waked up again. Thou art at Jerusalem ! said I to myself ; thou art at Jerusalem, three hundred paces from Calvary, the tomb of Jesus Christ thy Saviour ! and this idea roused all my faculties. Sometimes I was ready to ask myself if this were not a dream ; but immediately the sweet conviction of the reality, removing this sort of doubt, left in my soul nought but a delicious feeling of happiness and joy.

My intention had been to go, as soon as I was up, to the church of the Holy Sepulchre, and shut myself in with eight or nine monks of the Holy Land who are always there, as I shall explain to you by-and-by ; but, as the festival of the immaculate conception was on the morrow, and the community might perhaps have thought it singular if I had not celebrated it with them, I deferred my visit to the Holy Sepulchre till the following day.

At dawn I was already on the terrace of the monastery, which commands a view of the whole city and its environs. The sun rose magnificently behind the Mount

of Olives. I had in front the church of the Holy Sepulchre and its lofty cupolas ; farther off, the precincts and the site on which stood of old the temple of Solomon, bounded by the valley of Jehosaphat ; on the right, the ancient palace of David. On my knees, bending over the parapet, I could not tire of gazing at these places and these monuments. I scarcely listened to the good friar who pointed them out to me, for my heart had already guessed them before his lips had uttered their names ; I contemplated more especially that church of the Holy Sepulchre, to which are attached recollections so painful and so affecting. I should be obliged to wait twenty-four hours longer before I could go thither ; every moment seemed to me an age. I had fully made up my mind, however, to pay my first visit to Golgotha and the sacred tomb alone and in the silence of night. I knew how difficult this would be, on account of the great number of Greek and Armenian pilgrims who had come this year to Jerusalem ; I hoped, nevertheless, to find soon some favourable hour for the execution of my design. Meanwhile, eager to see the Via Dolorosa, and unable thoroughly to satisfy my impatience, I resolved to inspect at least some of the places along which the divine victim had passed on his way to consummate the grand expiation.

At two in the afternoon I left the monastery of the Franciscan Fathers, accompanied by Father Perpetuus de Solera, secretary of the Holy Land, and a dragoman. Deep sadness had taken possession of my soul ; it increased as I advanced towards that theatre of so much anguish.

The street leading to the Via Dolorosa is rather less irregular than that road itself, and there is an almost continual descent to the spot where Simon the Cyrenean assisted our Lord to carry his cross.

The first station that presents itself on quitting the monastery is that where Jesus, followed by an immense crowd, turned towards the women of Israel who were bewailing and weeping over his fate : it is marked by a walled-up doorway. I was impelled at this spot to pay some token of respect. The dragoman observed that I

should be insulted by the Turks if they were to see me. I was not of his opinion : I fell upon my knees, and, on seeing the most remarkable places passed by the Son of God, laden with the cross on which he was to atone for the sins of men, I repeated the same homage of adoration and sorrow, and not a creature said a word to me.

We advanced along the Via Dolorosa, when the Father who accompanied me stood still. "Here it was," said he, "that Jesus met his blessed mother !" These words produced a deep sensation ; they will long reverberate in my soul. What person in the world would not feel moved when thinking of that fond mother, meeting her son who had already once fallen beneath his burden ! . . . He was surrounded by executioners, covered with spittle, dust, and blood !

It was Jesus ! it was her son ! he whom she had suckled at her breast ! whom she had warmed in her bosom ! he, with whom she had fled into Egypt ! whom she had nursed in childhood ! with whom she had shared the bread of poverty ! whose absence for a few days only had caused her such painful alarm ! It was Jesus ! it was her son ! whom she saw going to die ! to die the most ignominious, the most painful of deaths ! it was her son whom she accompanied, and whose blood-stained footsteps she watered with her tears !

We arrived at the Prætorium of Pilate, where Christ was condemned to death. Opposite to the relics of that palace, and on the spot where the Man of Sorrows received with such entire resignation his sentence of death, methought I still heard the homicidal cries with which it had rung eighteen centuries ago ; and I could distinguish, amidst the clamours of death, these frightful words : "His blood be upon us and upon our children !" Methought I could see them written in letters of blood on each of the stones by which I was surrounded !

It was not very late, and I longed to see the garden of Gethsemane, whither Jesus frequently retired with his disciples, and where, the evening before his death, he was betrayed by a kiss. I requested the Father secretary and the dragoman to take me to it. We passed through the gate Bab-el-Sidi-Mariam which faces the

Mount of Olives ; it is called indiscriminately St. Stephen's or Mary's gate, because through this gate the saint was taken to be stoned, and because it leads also to the tomb of the blessed Virgin.

We descended almost immediately by an extremely rapid declivity of the valley of Jehosaphat to the spot where St. Stephen was martyred : "and they cast him out of the city, and stoned Stephen, calling upon God, and saying : Lord Jesus, receive my spirit !" (Acts vii. 58, 59.) I was also shown the place where Saul, who was consenting to his death, is said to have taken care of the clothes of those who stoned him.

You are obliged to cross the brook Cedron in the way to the garden of Gethsemane. This garden belongs to the Fathers of the Holy Land ; it is enclosed only by a wretched wall, a yard high, built of uncemented stones. Its extent is upwards of one hundred paces square. It contains eight olive-trees of remarkable dimensions and of such visible antiquity, that one may well believe with the tradition that they existed at the time of Christ. I am aware that during the siege of the Holy City, Titus ordered *all* the trees round about to be cut down. But even supposing the order to have been strictly executed, it appears to me allowable, and, indeed, perfectly reasonable, to think that some must have escaped ; as, in a town taken by assault, notwithstanding the formal orders of the general to put all to the sword, it is rarely, very rarely, that eight, ten persons, or more, do not escape the slaughter. Besides, it is ascertained, that olive-trees live thousands of years ; and if those in question have no other advantage over trees of their kind than that of having drawn their sap from a soil moistened with the sweat and the blood of the Son of God suffering for guilty man, that ought, methinks, to be sufficient to fix the attention of the Christian, and to obtain for them a sort of homage. Accordingly, not a creature approaches them but with respect ; the Greek, the Armenian, the very Arab, venerate them like ourselves.

The convent of Jerusalem keeps a Turkish guard to prevent any one from meddling with these olive-trees, which, notwithstanding their decrepitude, yield a few

olives, with which chaplets are made : their rarity seems to enhance still more the high value that is attached to them. I picked up a number of them. It was too late when I was told that it was forbidden upon pain of excommunication to touch the leaves and the branches. I had already taken the liberty to cut off some of them—a sin of ignorance which, I hope, you will deem very excusable. I will show them to you some day, if God brings me back to you.

Near the extremity of the garden is the spot where the apostles fell asleep when our Lord left them to pray. I was assured that their bodies had left an impression upon the stone on which they slept, and that some traces of it were still visible : but I discovered nothing that could authorize me to believe such an assertion.

A little farther is the grotto in which Jesus prayed ; it is called the Grotto of the Agony. It is in absolutely the same state as in the time of our Lord. The sort of vault which it forms is supported by three pilasters of the same rock. The light enters by an aperture made in the top, over which is placed a large grating to keep back the stones that the Turks might throw at it. Formerly the floor was on a level with the ground outside ; now you descend into it by eight or ten steps. It is closed by a door, the key of which is kept by the Franciscan Fathers.

It was in this place, one of the most venerable in the world, that the Saviour underwent the pangs of death, that he felt agony inexpressible, that he lifted his drooping hands towards the Creator, and that burning tears, trickling from his eyes and mingling with bloody sweat, bedewed his whole body ; it was here, in short, that the innocent Jesus endured for the sake of mankind all the rigours of inexorable justice On the very spot of the Agony is an altar, and above it a picture representing our Lord supported by the angel who came to strengthen him. Here we find also the following inscription :—

HIC FACTUS EST SUDOR EJUS SICUT GUTTÆ
SANGUINIS DECURRENTIS IN TERRAM.

A spot which one cannot behold without feeling an

inward shudder, is that where Judas delivered up his master. It is a space, fifteen or twenty paces in length, and two wide, between two low walls. It is called Osculo, from the kiss, in Latin *osculum*, with which the Son of Man was betrayed (Luke xxii. 48). The pilgrim, after adoring Jesus betrayed and bound, immediately retires filled with horror.

If the wretched apostle, after the sacrilegious bargain, by which he had engaged to deliver up his master to the Jews, had said to them: He whom I shall strike is the man; if he had then, at the head of a gang of homicides, and sword in hand, rushed upon Jesus, there would have been, after all, in this conduct, atrocious enough, it is true, but exempt from hypocrisy, something less hideous. This horrible idea would have been less revolting to the soul. But where do the annals of crimes present a more frightful signal of treachery than that of a kiss? "Whomsoever I shall kiss, that same is he; hold him fast." What language! The fondest token of love for selling a friend, a benefactor, a father, and for delivering him up to his bitterest enemies!

I returned to the monastery in religious silence.

To-day, the festival of the Conception, there has been a solemn service: the reverend Father warden of the Holy Sepulchre performed it with great pomp. He is mitred, crosiered, and bestows confirmation. His functions last for three years, at the expiration of which, if he be not re-elected, he returns to the shade of his cloister. The church was hung with rich draperies; the vestments of the officiating clergy were white, and adorned with gold embroidery of great beauty: these were a present from Portugal. The throne of the Father warden, above which I remarked with pleasure the arms of Austria, is of cloth of silver. All that met my view was magnificent, but the objects that most struck me were two candelabra of silver, eight feet high, with basso-relievos of exquisite workmanship. They were made out of the remains of a lamp of extraordinary richness and beauty, presented by the imperial family of Austria, which so nobly unites piety and generosity with glory. This lamp contained three hundred smaller ones. Un-

fortunately so admirable a masterpiece excited the jealousy of the Greeks, who cut the chain by which it was suspended before the Holy Sepulchre, and thus caused its destruction.

The front of the altar is of massive silver. It represents the descent of the Holy Ghost ; it is a gift of the kings of Naples, as well as the canopy for the host, which is of gold, and enriched with precious stones. Charles III. took from his finger a ring of great value to adorn this canopy. The Holy Land, in general, abounds in monuments of the piety of the catholic sovereigns of Europe, who formerly, at least, took delight in decorating the sacred places with sumptuous ornaments. In no church have I seen any of such beauty as in that of Jerusalem. But what appeared to me, for my part, still more admirable, was the manner in which the service is performed ; the majesty, the precision, the unity of the ceremonies, the harmony of the organ and of some fine voices—all this ravishes, enchants, and elevates the soul.

On coming out of church, I paid a visit to the principal members of the establishment. I was accompanied by Father Perpetuus, secretary of the Holy Land. Upon entering their cells, I was moved at the sight of the extreme poverty which I remarked in them : in each I found but a single wretched chair ; so that, if courtesy offered it to me, the secretary was forced to sit on the bed, and the person whom I was visiting to stand or to seat himself on a little box, if he had one. "All for God, nothing for ourselves," is the noble motto of a monk of the Holy Land. The Father warden of the holy sepulchre has only two small ill-furnished rooms for his lodging Such, nevertheless, is the man whom people have dared to represent as a sovereign surrounded with Asiatic splendour. And yet, in reality, he is but a poor Franciscan monk, who, excepting when he officiates, has no outward sign of his dignity, unless it be a silver-headed cane, which he uses when he goes abroad, barefooted like his brethren, dressed like his brethren, without crosier, without ring, and humble as the lowest of the children of St. Francis. The table of

the Fathers is extremely frugal ; but for that frugality, combined with the strictest economy, they could not afford relief to so many unfortunate persons as are fed and supported in the Holy Land ; they could not satisfy Turkish rapacity, or escape the vexations, the injustice, and the extortions of all kinds, with which they are continually threatened.

To-morrow, my dear friend, is the great day for me ; to-morrow I shall shut myself up in the church of the Holy Sepulchre ; to-morrow, if the crowd does not prevent me, upon Calvary, and beside the tomb of the Saviour of the world, with hands uplifted to heaven, I will perform the task which I imposed upon myself in coming to Jerusalem.

LETTER XV.

Visit to the Church of the Holy Sepulchre—Franciscan Fathers cleaning the sides of the Sepulchre—Cell—Gallery adjoining to it—Entry into the Holy Sepulchre.

Jerusalem, Church of the Holy Sepulchre,
December 16th, 1831.

EARLY in the morning of the 9th, I set out for the church of the Holy Sepulchre, with the dragoman and the Turks who had the key. No sooner had I entered than the latter locked the door. Nine or ten Franciscan friars dwell in this church, where they are shut up for three months. At the end of that time they are relieved, unless they choose to pass six months or a year there, out of devotion. My cell was ready for me. It was that of the Father warden of the Holy Land. These good Fathers received me with the kindness which characterizes them.

Before I touch upon other matters, my friend, it is right that I should give you some idea of this church. It is an extensive edifice, with two domes, very irregularly built, because it was requisite that regard should be paid to the inequalities of the ground that was to be encompassed by it. It contains not only the sepulchre, after

which it is named, but also Calvary and some other sanctuaries.

The Catholics, the Greeks, the Armenians, are each in possession of a particular church. The Copts have but a chapel backed against the Holy Sepulchre ; and the Nestorians or Jacobites of Chaldea and Syria, as well as the Maronites of Mount Lebanon, merely an altar.

Divine service is performed there according to the ritual of different Christian nations. The first three only have a right to say mass in the Sepulchre. Close to their church is the convent in which the monks who shut themselves up here reside.

The pilgrims can have the privilege of being shut up for one night, and in this case, they sleep in the convents of their respective nations, sometimes where they can, for want of room.

The church is usually open in Lent and at Easter. The pilgrims who come at those times never fail to find in the interior, close to the door, eight or ten Turks, who, squatting cross-legged on an enormous divan, tell stories, smoke, drink coffee, and never stop but to take their money before they permit any one to enter ; but when the pilgrimage is over, that door is frequently unclosed for more than a month, and there is no other method of gaining admittance but paying a certain sum to those who keep the keys. Food and other necessaries are at such times handed in through an aperture made in the principal door of the church, but which is not large enough for any person to get through. At night it is further secured by an iron cross.

But to return to what relates to myself personally. The account of a little incident will explain to you much better than a thousand words would do, with what sentiments my soul was filled. On entering the church, I perceived the Fathers of the Holy Land, busy, broom in hand, sweeping down, in the utmost silence, the sides of the little edifice containing the sepulchre. I immediately took up a broom to assist them. A bit of rush having dropped off, I picked it up, and, looking at it, full of the thought of the Holy Sepulchre, and of the infinite goodness of God, I said to myself : "If this rush could become

in thy hands the sceptre of the world, on condition that thou shouldst not have been at Jerusalem, what wouldst thou do?" And He who holds my life and my being in his hands knew the answer of my heart !

To you, as well as to many other persons, this may appear silly. Your piety, however, authorizes me to doubt it, my friend. At any rate, I declare to you that I would not exchange this silliness for all the goods of this world. I shall most carefully preserve that bit of rush.

My cell is not more than thirty paces from the tomb of our Saviour, and one hundred from Calvary. I hear the hymns of the Greeks, the Armenians, the Copts, the Catholics, ascending from that altar of salvation—the hymns, in short, of all the pilgrims, who, bowing their heads in the dust, fervently repeat, each in his own idiom, the name of Jesus Christ.

When I step out of my cell into the gallery which adjoins it, I behold the precincts of the edifice containing the tomb of the Saviour, covered with prostrate pilgrims. What tears are shed near that sacred Sepulchre ! Oh ! what man, after leaving his country, his friends, his relatives, to come so far, amid so many dangers, to visit the tomb of his Lord, would not be deeply affected on approaching it ! . . . The women more especially, whose piety has something more touching and more tender, cannot help shedding floods of tears, while touching with their burning lips the steps that lead to the rock of the crucifixion.

Meanwhile, I prepared myself, in silence and prayer, to ascend Golgotha and to enter the Holy Sepulchre. .

Two days had already passed, and I had not yet been able to approach those two hallowed and awful places. Still I adhered more firmly than ever to my resolution to be, in my first visit to them, alone with my God ; it was my wish to adore in the silence of complete solitude Him, who, by an ineffable prodigy of mercy toward his creatures, forsook the heavens to come to this very place to suffer and die. Unfortunately, a crowd of pilgrims who had recently arrived beset for two days and nights

the church of the Holy Sepulchre, which they had paid the Turks a large fee to open.

At length, on the third day, the kind monks came to inform me that the church would not be open the whole day, except for me ; and that, in concert with the Greek and Armenian sacristans, they had taken precautions for preventing the entrance of any person whatsoever, the whole time that I should be there.

On the 12th, at half past ten in the morning, the most profound silence reigned around Golgotha and the tomb of the Saviour. I went forth barefoot, and with a lighted taper in my hand to visit Calvary, and a few moments afterwards I ascended, trembling, the steps that led to it.

At one o'clock, still surrounded by a silence uninterrupted, save by the pulsations of my heart, I entered the Holy Sepulchre.

At three, some one came to apprise me that the Greeks were about to commence their service : I returned to my cell, and there shut myself up for the rest of the day.

Adieu, my friend, adieu, adieu !

LETTER XVI.

Impression made by the Church of the Holy Sepulchre—History of that Church—Its Destruction by Fire—It is rebuilt by the Greeks and the Armenians—They oppress the Latins—Description of the Church—Mass in the Holy Sepulchre.

Church of the Holy Sepulchre, December 12th, 1831.

THERE is certainly nothing on earth so august and so sacred as the church of the Holy Sepulchre. The Christian who approaches it, especially for the first time, without emotion is an insensible being, a being by himself. I should even doubt whether such a one ever existed, if it were not too certain that there have been seen

travellers belonging to christendom, at least by baptism, who have made it an impious glory to enter these awful places with a levity full of insolence, casting around them looks of mingled curiosity and derision, measuring with daring eye what the pious crowd in its deep devotion scarcely presumed to contemplate, and having the air of being come, like the Jews, for the purpose of solemnly denying the Redemption, and telling Jesus Christ, as it were, to his face : " We will not have thee to reign over us ! "

The streets leading to the Holy Sepulchre are muddy, partly unpaved, and rather narrow. From whichever side you come, you are obliged to pass through a low and narrow doorway before you can reach the open space in front of the church.

The façade evidently dates from the time of the emperor Constantine ; it is irregular and disfigured by the buildings around it, buildings which form part of it, and which the Greeks and the Armenians have seized for themselves. Eusebius, the ecclesiastical historian, has preserved the letter in which Constantine orders Macarius, bishop of Jerusalem, to build a magnificent church on the spot where the mystery of our redemption was accomplished. Three hundred years after its erection, this church was sacked by Chosroes II. king of Persia, and, unfortunately, the cross was carried off. Heraclius reconquered that inestimable treasure, and Modestus, bishop of Jerusalem, re-established the church. Not long afterwards, the Caliph Omar made himself master of Jerusalem ; but he showed favour to the Christians, who, during his reign, enjoyed the free exercise of their religion. In 1009, Haken, sultan of Egypt, destroyed once more the holy places. From that period they suffered more or less till the memorable time when the Crusaders, in 1099, gained possession of Jerusalem, and rescued the tomb of Christ from the hands of infidels.

God did not permit the Holy City to continue long in the power of the Christians : at the expiration of ninety-nine years it was retaken by the Mussulmans. The Christians then sacrificed their property with joy to redeem the church of the Holy Sepulchre from the hands

of the infidels. In 1257 the Franciscan Fathers came to Palestine, and quietly undertook the care of it, as well as of the other sanctuaries; but they were obliged to withdraw on the approach of Sultan Melek Seraf, who, at the head of a considerable army, took the city on the 4th of May, in the same year, and put twenty-five thousand Christians to the sword. The Latins, horror-struck at this barbarity, and relentlessly persecuted by that cruel prince, quitted Palestine and Syria.

As soon, however, as it was possible, the Franciscan Fathers returned clandestinely to the sanctuaries which they had been forced to abandon to the profanation and the insults of the enemies of the Lord. The ancient chronicles expressly say that the reverend Father Rogerio Guarini, proceeding in 1333 from Aquitaine to Armenia, passed through Egypt; and that, at the solicitation, the sultan granted permission for a small number of monks to dwell in safety near the Holy Sepulchre. Other historians state the same fact: "The custody of the sepulchre of Christ at Jerusalem was in the year 1333 committed to eight Franciscans by the sultan of Egypt."*

In spite, however, of the assurances given to Father Guarini, and even in spite of the favourable disposition of the sultan then reigning, the Franciscans were incessantly annoyed till the year 1342, when, through the protection of Robert, king of Sicily, and his consort, queen Sancia, they were permitted, on payment of enormous sums, to have at Jerusalem a permanent establishment by the church, to celebrate the holy mysteries and to perform divine service there, with the certainty of not being exposed to further vexations.

The church of the Holy Sepulchre was almost totally consumed by fire on the 12th of October, 1808. I am sure that I shall gratify you by here transcribing an extract from an account of that conflagration, addressed at the time by an Italian monk, an eye-witness, to one of his friends. You will find in it things which disdainful incredulity will always refuse to believe, but which, for the friend of truth, are not on that account the less in-

* Genebrardus in *Chronographia*, lib. iv

contestable. I have collected here all the information capable of enlightening and leading to an entire conviction. I have questioned men who saw everything, men of great virtue, of perfect sincerity, veterans full of the fear of God, and whose age warned them to hold themselves in readiness to appear at any moment before the Supreme Judge ; and I declare to you in his divine presence, that these witnesses agreed unanimously in their reports.

NARRATIVE OF THE DESTRUCTION OF THE CHURCH OF
THE HOLY SEPULCHRE BY FIRE ON THE
12TH OF OCTOBER, 1808.

“ If the prophet Jeremiah could return to this world, would he have, in these days of disaster and mourning, less reason than of old to exhort the people to weep over the woes of distressed Jerusalem ? Would he have less plaintive lamentations to utter over the sorrows and the dejection of the unfortunate daughter of Zion ? Ah ! he would not be the only one whose eyes would be two well-springs of tears ! Everywhere he would find companions of his grief !

“ The morning of the 12th of October was terrible ; the recollection of that calamitous day extorts a cry of anguish from the most indifferent, the most obdurate, hearts. Catholics, Schismatics, Heretics, are in affliction ; Orientals and Occidentals are weeping ; the Jews themselves shed tears ; there is not a creature in the Holy City, be he of what nation soever he may, but shares the general grief and consternation. The church of the Holy Sepulchre, that monument erected by St. Helena and Constantine with imperial magnificence, and preserved with pious care by the Christians—that temple, the most august in the world—that temple, which was the admiration of the most distant nations, has just been consumed by fire ! It is not known whether this is the effect of accident or design ; but such was the rapidity of the flames that, in the space of a few hours. the galleries, the columns, the altars, were annihilated. Here are some particulars of that deplorable event.

“ On the 12th of October, about three in the morning.

the fire was first discovered in the chapel of the Armenians, situated on the gallery or terrace of the great church of the Holy Sepulchre. The assistant-sacristan of the monks of St. Francis, who was going to attend to the lamps and to visit the chapel of the Calvary, was the first who perceived it; and as there was not a living soul there but a poor Armenian priest, an old man, on whom the sight of the fire had such an effect as seemingly to derange his reason, he instantly ran in quest of assistance. But the rapidity of the flames rendered it useless; when it arrived, they had already enveloped the chapel of the Armenians, and even their habitation, as well as that of the Greeks, part of which was built of wood, covered with oil paint.

“The Franciscan Fathers, after the midnight service, had retired to rest; aroused by the strange noise which they heard in the great church, they rose in haste: what was their consternation!..... In spite of a thousand dangers, they flew to the fire.... The door was closed; and to aggravate their despair to the utmost, a few moments afterwards the flames burst forth from the side of the Greeks and the Armenians, and from the side of the Syrians, Messineans, and Copts, threatening the cupola of the great church, built with prodigious beams, covered with lead, and raised perpendicularly over the monument in which the most Holy Sepulchre is situated. The timbers, which I have just mentioned, were brought at a great expense from Mount Lebanon, at the beginning of the last century, when the Christian princes furnished the means for erecting this dome, a real masterpiece for its height and the boldness of its construction.

“All had fled... The Franciscan Fathers being alone left, and destitute of necessary implements, strove to get through a little window, with the intention of giving the alarm to the monastery of St. Saviour and to the ministers of the Turkish government. Meanwhile, the young catholic Arabs on the outside got into the interior and defied the flames, in order to save whatever they could. But at this moment the fire gained the dome, the altars of the Virgin, and the organ: the church resembled a furnace. The pilasters soon fell with a crash, and with

them the arcades and pillars around the Holy Sepulchre ; a shower of lead poured down upon it ; so fierce was the fire that the thickest marble columns were cloven, as well as the pavement and the marble which cover the monument. At length, between five and six o'clock, the great dome fell with a tremendous noise, carrying with it all the massive columns and the pilasters which still supported the gallery of the Greeks, and likewise the habitations of the Turks near the dome.

"The most Holy Sepulchre was now buried beneath a mountain of fire, which must, one would conceive, destroy it forever : the church looked like a volcano at the time of eruption.

"After the account of so great a misfortune, I am happy to be able to console your piety by relating to you the wonders of the divine assistance in favour of the monks of St. Francis.

"The fire, having reached the wooden door which separates the altar of Mary Magdalen from the chapel of the choir of the great church, spared the sacristy, and everything in it ; neither the little monastery of those venerable Fathers, nor the cells which it contains, nor the chapel, received the slightest injury.

"None of the marble, at the spot where Jesus appeared after his resurrection to Mary Magdalen has been damaged, though the fire was extremely fierce on that side, burning the organ, and breaking and calcining the marble about it.

"That chapel of the Holy Sepulchre which is served by the Franciscans, though situated beneath the dome, and consequently in the centre of the conflagration, and buried in the flames, has not suffered any injury in the interior : the silks which adorned it, and even the cords of the lamps, were found again ; the excellent picture of the resurrection, on canvas, which closes the Holy Sepulchre, was untouched ; though the chapel of the Copts, adjoining to that monument, was reduced to ashes.

"In the chapel of the Angel, which is at the entrance of the Holy Sepulchre, there was nothing burned but half the velvet which served to adorn it : the walls and the pavement sustained no damage.

“At the chapel of the Calvary, the statue of the blessed Virgin, which stood between the altar of the Purification and that of the Exaltation of the Cross, was preserved uninjured. That statue was a gift from the king of Portugal.

“The spot where our Lord was crucified belongs to the Catholics; it has suffered little injury. The same cannot be said of the place where the cross was erected, and which is in the possession of the Greeks. It is a most remarkable circumstance that, notwithstanding the violence with which the wind was then blowing, notwithstanding the vicinity of a window which was likely to favour the ravages of the flames, the chapel contiguous externally to that of the Copts suffered no injury.

“This chapel, built on the spot where the blessed Virgin stood with the other Maries when the Jews were fastening her Son to the cross, is unharmed; and the picture representing her, though so near to the fire, has likewise escaped without damage.

“At six o'clock the violence of the conflagration began to subside; and at nine it was no longer dangerous or threatening.

“On the following day, when the rubbish could be cleared away, it excited fresh astonishment to discover that the holy stone which covers the stone of the Unc-tion, and which was supposed to be calcined, had not suffered. No lives were lost, but some of the brethren were hurt.”

Such, my dear friend, is the lamentable disaster, as far as one can convey an idea of it in so brief an extract, which in 1808 afflicted Jerusalem, and the mere account of which would, in better times, have overwhelmed the Christian world with consternation. I repeat to you that I questioned the monks who were present at this terrible catastrophe; all of them assured me of the accuracy of these details. I addressed myself more particularly to a venerable Spaniard, Father Giuseppe Dommegue, who was in the sepulchre itself at the time of the fire, and who has added some other interesting details to those which

I have just given you respecting that event. On the following day, the Fathers of St. Francis went, according to custom, to the Holy Sepulchre to tell their beads, but sobs would not allow them to finish. On the 14th, they performed mass there. Notwithstanding the ruins which surrounded them, they suspended none of their customary devotions and processions; if they had to walk over rubbish, they sang not the less diligently the mercies of the Lord.

The church of the Holy Sepulchre has been rebuilt. But, as the Catholic monks are extremely poor, and they were not furnished for this purpose with supplies proportionate to the magnitude of the undertaking, they have been obliged to relinquish the honour to the Greeks and the Armenians, who, being very wealthy, were able to execute it at their own cost. Their opulence procures for them, from the Ottoman Porte, facilities and privileges which the Fathers of the Holy Land cannot obtain.

This inability of the Latins to take a principal part in the rebuilding of the church has prejudiced them in a way that cannot but afflict a Catholic heart. Formerly the sole possessors of the greater part of the holy places, they have found themselves constrained to share with strangers that inestimable treasure, of which they had so long been the only masters, and which they alone had defended against the Turks, at the risk of their blood and their lives.

The Greeks and the Armenians assert that the expense, including the presents which they were obliged to make in order to obtain the necessary firmans, exceeds fourteen millions of piasters, or about five millions of francs (upwards of £200,000 sterling).

The Greeks, strong in their wealth, never have employed, neither do they still employ it, but to oppress the Latins, whom they view with the same eye as a haughty conqueror views a vanquished nation. One word from the Catholic princes to the Sublime Porte would suffice to put an end to this state of things; but that word none has the courage to utter. A minister of a great power at Constantinople, to whom a zealous missionary was making, in the name of the crucified Jesus,

humble remonstrances on the lamentable state of the holy places, at the same time imploring his powerful protection, replied: "What! for the sake of four stones would you turn Europe and Asia topsy-turvy!" A sacrilegious answer, and the more absurd, inasmuch as nothing more was solicited than a mere recommendation to the Ottoman ministry.

Follow me now, my dear friend; we will go together over the church of the Holy Sepulchre.

The gloom that pervades the interior strikes the pilgrim at the very moment of crossing the threshold, and prepares him in some degree for the extraordinary impressions that he is about to receive.

The first object that he has before him is the stone of the Uncion, upon which the body of our Lord was perfumed with myrrh and aloes, before it was deposited in the tomb. It is elevated but a few inches above the floor, and is about eight feet in length, and two broad. As some pilgrims took the liberty to break pieces off, it has been covered with a red marble: a ball of copper gilt adorns each of the four corners; ten lamps are continually burning above it; on either side are enormous candelabra, with wax-candles from fifteen to twenty feet high; they belong to the Catholics, the Greeks, and the Armenians, who have this sanctuary in common, and who come daily in turn to burn incense there.

On the right of the entrance to the church, and twelve paces from the stone of the Uncion, is Calvary. It is about eighteen or twenty feet above the level of the ground; two flights of twenty-one steps lead up to it on either side. The top is now converted into two chapels, cased with marble, separated by an arcade, and the floors of which are likewise of marble. One of them especially bears the name of the chapel of Calvary. It belongs to the Greeks, and is constantly lighted by a great number of lamps. Here was erected the holy cross, that on which Jesus, condemned to the most cruel and ignominious of punishments, deigned to suffer and to die for us, so much did he love us! The place is covered with an altar, under which you must stoop down to see it. I have seen it, my friend; I have seen that awful and

sacred spot ; I have pressed my lips to it ; and human language cannot furnish words to express to you what then passed in my heart. Stop, Charles ! give up reading, for a moment, or rather let us both pause, and in solemn devotion sigh and adore—sigh over that consummation of iniquity on the part of men ; adore that consummation of love on the part of God.

According to tradition, Christ had his face turned towards the west, and Jerusalem behind him. Two round black stones mark the spots where the crosses of the thieves were planted. These two crosses were not placed in a line with that of the Saviour : they formed with it a sort of triangle, so that Christ could see the two criminals crucified near him.

Not far from the place where the cross stood, is to be seen one of the rocks that were cleft when Christ expired. "Rocks were cleft," says the Gospel, and the prodigy is still visible and striking ; it speaks to every eye. The cleft in the rock is exposed to view, and is seen through a trelliswork of silver.

The other chapel, which forms part of Calvary, belongs to the Latins. This is the place where the sacrilegious hands of the executioners fastened our Saviour to the cross. Here the holy mysteries are daily celebrated. Before the altar are inlaid, in the pavement, ornaments in mosaic of different colours, among which red predominates, as if to indicate that this was the spot which was dyed by the precious blood of our Lord. Here, too, a great quantity of lamps are kept incessantly burning.

To the right of the altar is a barred window, looking into an exterior chapel, dedicated to Notre Dame des Douleurs, to which every day before dawn a monk of St. Saviour's repairs to perform mass. It was to this place that the blessed Virgin retired during the bloody preparations for the last torments reserved for her son. What other place ever witnessed a grief equal to that of such a mother ! What other mother ever heard so close at hand the redoubled blows of hammers driving sharp

nails into the hands of her son, piercing the feet of him to whom she had given birth !

Descending from Calvary and turning to the right, you come to a chapel four paces in length and two and a half wide, which belongs to the Greeks. There, beneath the altar, you see the pillar of reviling (*degli Improperi*). It is of gray marble, spotted with black. It is only a fragment of a larger pillar, the other part of which is at Rome, in the church of St. Praxeda, exposed to the devotion of the faithful. It was on this fragment of the pillar that the Jews made our Saviour sit while they crowned him with thorns, smote him on the face after blindfolding him, and said to him in barbarous derision : " Prophecy who is it that smote thee."

Twenty-five paces further you descend by a flight of thirty steps to the chapel of St. Helena, which belongs to the Armenians. It is spacious, and surmounted by a cupola, which is supported by four columns of unequal thickness. You see on the left the spot where St. Helena remained in prayer during the search that was made by her order for the discovery of the true cross. On the right, and in the same chapel, but twelve steps lower, is a small sanctuary belonging to the Latins ; this is the place where was at length found the august sign of the redemption.

The history of the discovery of the holy cross is too generally known, my dear friend, for me to suppose that you are not acquainted with it. There are, nevertheless, certain particulars which have been omitted by more than one historian ; and which, I dare say, you will not be displeased to find here. If I should merely call to your mind something that you already know, I am certain that you would read what I write with that warm interest which piety takes in the things of God, and especially in the ineffable wonders of his love for us.

I observed to you in one of my last letters, that in the Holy Land everything tells of St. Helena and the monuments which she there founded : for fifteen centuries Palestine has rung with her name. Mother of the prince, who, after three hundred years of persecution, first raised Christianity to the throne with himself, and with whom

modern incredulity has contested the title of Great, only out of hatred to Jesus Christ ; the illustrious empress could not see her son triumph by the *cross*, without feeling like him a profound gratitude and an ardent zeal for the glory of Him whose miraculous protection that sign had announced to him ; hence the tender devotion of mother and son for the holy places.

Having become peaceable master of the empire by the defeat of Maxentius, Constantine resolved to erect a magnificent temple to Jesus Christ on the very spot which the Jews had chosen for the scene of his ignominious execution. In 326 he committed the fulfilment of this intention to St. Macarius, bishop of Jerusalem, directing Dracilianus, deputy of the prefect of the Prætorium and governor of the province, to procure for the bishop all the requisite workmen and materials, promising himself to send pillars, costly marbles, precious stones, gold, and all the ornaments necessary for making it the richest temple in the world.

Helena determined to take part in so glorious an undertaking. Not deterred by the fatigues of a long voyage, she set out at the age of seventy-nine for Palestine, with the intention of concurring to the utmost of her power, by her largesses not less than by her advice, in the great work of her son. On seeing the deplorable state in which Calvary was, she all at once felt animated with an ardent desire to find the cross of the Saviour ; and, full of this idea, she forthwith set about accomplishing it. The difficulties were such as would have daunted a less generous zeal : none knew what had become of the cross ; no mention is found of it in history, either before or after the destruction of Jerusalem. Some asserted that it had been hidden and secured from profanation by the care of the apostles and the first Christians. Others, and these were most numerous, had no doubt that it had been buried in a hole dug near the tomb, according to the custom of the Jews. But where was the site of the tomb ? on this point there was no certain indication. To disfigure the place, the pagans had thrown upon the hill heaps of mould, stones, and rubbish. Subsequently, under Adrian, they had there erected a statue to Jupiter,

and built a temple to Venus, persuaded that the Christians, who abhorred the impure worship of that goddess, would thereby be forever prevented from repairing thither to adore their crucified God.

By order of Helena, whose researches are said to have been directed by an inhabitant of Jerusalem, the statues and the infamous temple were demolished, and the materials carried outside the city. On digging deeper at several points, they came at length to the Holy Sepulchre, and close to it were discovered three crosses buried in the ground ; apart from them were three nails, with which the feet and hands of the Saviour had been pierced, and likewise the inscription as recorded by the evangelists. Heaven soon made known by a miracle which was the instrument of redemption. By the advice of Macarius, the body of a female sick unto death was touched by each of the crosses. The touch of the first two had no effect ; that of the third instantly cured her. To this prodigy of divine mercy was added another still more striking, related by St. Paulinus and Sulpicius Severus : when applied to a corpse, the true cross restored it to life.

St. Helena, happy in having found that treasure on which her heart set a higher value than on all the splendours of the world, hastened to adore in that sacred wood, as St. Ambrose tells us, not the wood itself, but the King of Glory who had been fastened to it. After this solemn homage, she lost no time in sending a large piece of it to her son, who received so precious a gift with as much joy as respect, and resolved to place the fragment beneath his helmet, to serve him for a safeguard in battle. She caused the other part to be enchased in silver, and committed the care of it to the bishop of Jerusalem. The practice was soon introduced of exhibiting it publicly, on Good Friday, to the veneration of the believers. On that day the bishop first went and prostrated himself before it ; after him the clergy and the people ; and it is from this custom that the ceremony performed annually on that day in all the Catholic churches is derived—a ceremony in which the officiating minister, uncovering the cross, addresses the Christian

congregation in these words, so calculated to fill them with grief, gratitude, and love : "Behold the wood of the cross on which was suspended the *salvation* of the world ! Come, let us adore !"

I have been longer, my dear friend, than I intended, in describing to you, while treating of the chapel of St. Helena, all the objects at Jerusalem which so powerfully move the heart. I must not, however, omit to introduce here a fact which philosophic philanthropy would not have failed to publish and to blazon abroad by means of all the trumpets of Fame, had it belonged to a pagan or an infidel prince, but which it has feigned not so much as to perceive in the first of the Christian emperors. It is this—that to Constantine is due the suppression of the most cruel as well as the most ignominious of punishments. Inspired by his reverence for the cross, he forbade the crucifixion of malefactors ; the tribunals obeyed, and since that time this species of punishment has been excluded from the criminal code of every Christian nation I resume.

In the same line, but ten paces farther than the chapel of St. Helena, you meet with another built on the very spot where the soldiers divided among them the garments of Christ. Every time I happen to pass it, my friend, a certain blended feeling of horror and fear thrills my whole being I represent to myself Mary, that kind and fond mother, at the foot of the cross, a prey to sorrows so much the keener, inasmuch as her heart alone is capable of comprehending, of feeling, all the outrages perpetrated on her son, all the afflictions which he endures ; and I behold soldiers, at the moment when they have just witnessed such poignant anguish, in presence of a concourse in which compassion has silenced hatred ; when all Nature puts on mourning ; when the rocks themselves appear to feel—I behold soldiers, engrossed by a single thought, that of filthy lucre, disputing, with hideous eagerness, the possession of the bloody prize, throwing the dice, and leaving the lot to decide to which of them the tunic of the august victim shall belong ! O, my God !

Forty paces farther, making a slight curve, you come

to the spot where Christ appeared in the semblance of a gardener to Mary Magdalen, after his resurrection. An altar has been erected there.

Opposite is the chapel of the Appearance, belonging to the Franciscan Fathers of the Holy Land. It is thus named, because, according to the traditions, it was there that our Saviour appeared to St. Mary for the first time after his resurrection.

On leaving this chapel you perceive a magnificent rotunda, surrounded by eighteen massive pilasters, which support a gallery and a majestic dome. In the centre, and beneath the dome, where the light which illumines the interior is admitted, rises a structure or mausoleum of yellow and white marble, in the form of a *catafalque*. Beneath this monument is the Sepulchre of Jesus Christ.

The entrance is towards the east. When you have passed the door, you find yourself in the chapel of the Angel, the inner walls of which are completely lined with marble. In the middle stands a pedestal, supporting a stone, eighteen inches square, upon which was seated the angel on the day of the resurrection, when the holy women came to embalm the body of Jesus, and he said to them : " He is risen, he is not here."

Does it not seem to you, my dear friend, that, by the very arrangement of this place, by the thoughts of joy and life which it excites, the goodness of God designed to temper the too painful impressions which the sudden sight of the tomb of Jesus would have produced ? and is there not, as it were, an angel's voice heard there, saying to the Christian as to the holy women : " Be of good cheer ; he is risen, he is not here."

Opposite to the pedestal you see an aperture, or door, that is very low and still narrower, whence proceeds a strong light. You cannot pass it without bending nearly double. It leads into a closet, about six feet square, and nearly eight high, lighted by forty lamps, the smoke from which escapes by three holes made in the vaulted roof.

On the right you see a marble table, as long as the closet, and half as wide, that is to say, six feet by three. This closet is the Holy Sepulchre ; that table, the sepul-

chral table on which was laid the body of our Lord Jesus Christ, the head turned towards the west, and the feet to the east. The tomb and table are chiselled out of the solid rock ; they have been covered with marble, to preserve them from the indiscretion of the pilgrims, who sometimes used to take the pious liberty of breaking off and carrying away fragments of them.

The Franciscan Fathers, the Greeks, and the Armenians, perform mass daily in the Holy Sepulchre, each in turn, with great exactness and in perfect order. The Copts officiate behind the monument, in a chapel of wood, rudely constructed : all come several times a day to burn incense in the holy places with pomp and solemnity.

Opposite to the monument you perceive the church of the Greeks, which is extremely magnificent and in tolerably good taste, though gilding has been lavished upon it to excess. The stalls, of common wood, are scarcely in keeping with the riches by which they are surrounded : the pictures are numerous, and in general bad, and the statues middling. The whole, however, is striking, and one cannot help admiring its beauty. You remark in the middle a circle of marble, in the centre of which is a little pillar that marks, according to them, the centre of the earth !

The church of the Armenians, built in the part of the arcades belonging to them, is likewise very beautiful.

Extraordinary circumstance !—the Catholics, the Greeks, the Armenians, who inhabit Lebanon, in short, all the Christian nations, have at Jerusalem representatives whose voices are incessantly rising with incense towards that God who sacrificed his only son to save the world. One single voice does not there murmur the name of Jesus Christ ! It is that of the Protestant !

Ever since I shut myself up in the church of the Holy Sepulchre, I have not ceased, my dear friend, to explore the different parts of this immense building. The soul, especially at first, is, as it were, overwhelmed with the grandeur and the sanctity of the objects which surround

it. One must have lived some days here, and become, in a manner, accustomed to the place, to find one's self in such a tone of mind as to be able to observe things closely, to seize the impressions which they leave behind, and to render an account of them to one's self.

For offering my adoration to the Saviour of the world, I love in preference the silence and the darkness of night, when the pilgrims have retired, when I have no light but that of a few lamps, and when I cannot hear my own footfalls.

In squeezing between the pillars which surround the tomb of our Lord, in passing the stone of the Uncion, in ascending Golgotha, methinks I hear a voice crying on every side to me as to Moses : " Draw not nigh hither : put off thy shoes from thy feet, for the place whereon thou standest is holy ground ! "

I have had the happiness to attend every day, and, in general, to take the communion, at the solemn mass which the Fathers perform at five o'clock in the Holy Sepulchre. Those who sing stay outside ; but the priest officiates in the tomb itself, on a portable altar which is removed after the ceremony.

I begin to get there too early ; and, kneeling before the tomb, I await the arrival of the priest. When he appears, as I am obliged to retire for want of room, I place myself, with a taper in my hand, on the spot where the beloved apostle stooped down to see whether it was true that the body of the Lord had been removed as Magdalen had told him. Presently, those harmonious strains of the singers ; those tender or plaintive sighs of the organ ; that deep devotion of the monks ; that sacred tomb which is before my eyes, and only a couple of paces from my heart, throbbing with gratitude and love ; those clouds of incense rising around the altar of the minister of the Most High—all this penetrates, ravishes, intoxicates me with a sort of happiness, all the transports of which I shall never be able to describe.

Adieu, my very dear friend, adieu !

LETTER XVII.

Pilgrims at Jerusalem—Children of the Pilgrims—Procession—Tomb of Godfrey and Baldwin—Sword of Godfrey—Jerusalem taken by the Egyptians—Favour shown by them to the Christians—Influence of Money in the Countries Ruled by the Koran.

Jerusalem, Church of the Holy Sepulchre,
December 23d, 1831.

YOU cannot form any idea, my dear friend, of the number of pilgrims, Greeks, Armenians, Maronites, &c., who flock to Jerusalem to visit the holy places. At this moment they are computed at nearly four thousand, and the number is daily increasing; at Easter it will be much greater still: some of them come from the remotest countries: St. Petersburg, and even the farthest extremities of Russia furnish their's. They usually pass Lent here, and it is not till after Easter that they set out on their return home.

When I cast my eyes on this multitude, and count the Catholic pilgrims, I am astounded, stupified. In four thousand we are guess how many.—Six hundred; four hundred; two hundred, at least you will say.—You are wrong. We are . . . four: a Polish shoemaker of Odessa, with his wife, another Pole, and your humble servant. And among the ten thousand who, as I have told you, are likely to be here in Lent, a number that is not exaggerated, I do not suppose that there will be twenty foreign Catholics!

Beside this indifference place the following trait: last year there came to Jerusalem a Greek with his wife, who had lost the use of all her limbs. Well, this man was seen everywhere, even in processions, carrying his wife on his back, praying with her and for her. The first time that he crossed the threshold of the Holy Sepulchre, some Turks began to laugh and turn him into ridicule, but this indecent mockery was soon converted into the warmest admiration.

Let people extol as much as they please those two sons whom antiquity exhibits to us harnessing themselves

to their mother's car, drawing her to the temple, and then expiring from fatigue; the husband of this poor cripple is a much greater hero in my estimation. They were certain of gaining admiration, and somewhat of pagan pride might mingle with their filial piety; he had to bear up against ridicule and mockery, and his conduct could not have any other motive than the love of God, and a holy confidence in his infinite goodness.

The pilgrims who have families frequently bring with them three or four children. Nothing can be more interesting than to see these little creatures with their parents. They imitate all their motions; they repeat in particular their numerous salutations, always bowing down to the very ground, and, like them, incessantly making the sign of the cross.

Do not wonder, my dear friend, that I occasionally make mention of the little children; I love them, if I dare say so, as the kind Jesus loved them When I see those innocents, methinks I hear my Saviour saying: "Suffer the little children to come unto me," and declaring that whosoever is not or does not become like one of them shall not enter the kingdom of heaven. One day I witnessed the arrival of one of these families, which appeared to me truly worthy of all the admiration of a religious and feeling mind: to me the sight was curious and interesting. Adorned with a rich saddle and panniers, balanced only by four small children, an ass advanced proudly bearing the joyous family. In the middle, on the back of the animal domicile, was seated a graceful girl, not more than seven years old, above her brothers: the father was on foot. Figure to yourself these five pretty little pilgrims, whose light hair floated in the breeze; and then cast your eyes on that worthy father, who, walking by their side, played with them while talking to them of God, and relating to them, in language suited to their comprehension, the history of the infant Jesus; then listening with delight to their infant tongues lisping forth *Bethlehem*, the *stable*, the *manger*, and other remarkable things which they would soon see—and tell me if you, too, would not have been charmed, enchanted.

I know not whether I have already told you that every day different nations successively go in procession to the sanctuaries inclosed in the church of the Holy Sepulchre. The day before yesterday, at that of the Greeks, among the torches borne by the pilgrims, I observed one so much higher than the rest that I conceived it must be in the hands of a giant. I approached, but what was my surprise to see that it was only a fine little boy, mounted on his mother's shoulders, and carrying a taper. She was a Greek woman, who, moving on steadily and quietly with her precious burden, prayed devoutly with the other pilgrims.

I had a particular longing to see the tombs of the two great heroes of the Christians—Godfrey, the terror of the Mussulmans, who, a thousand times, defied death for the sake of his God ; and, when proclaimed king after victory, declared that he would never wear a crown of gold where Jesus Christ had worn a crown of thorns : and Baldwin, his brother, who, nobly walking in his steps, was worthy to succeed him. I desired to be conducted to them, but they had disappeared : not the least vestige of them is left. The Greeks, who have rebuilt the church not only took no care of those precious monuments which the flames had spared, but have even covered with plaster the following inscriptions, which the pilgrim could not look at or read without respect:—

HIC JACET INCLYTUS DUX GODOFRIDUS DE
BULION, QUI TOTAM ISTAM TERRAM ACQUI-
SIVIT CULTUI CHRISTIANO, CUJUS ANIMA
REGNET CUM CHRISTO. AMEN.

REX BALDUINUS, JUDAS ALTER MACHABEUS,
SPES PATRIÆ, VIGOR ECCLESIAE, VIRTUS UTRIVSQUE,
QUEM FORMIDABANT, CUI DONA TRIBUTA FEREBANT,
CEDAR ET ÆGYPTUS, DAN, AC HOMICIDÂ DAMASCUS,
PROH DOLOR ! IN MODICO CLAUDITUR HOC TUMULO.

In this point, as in many others, the Greeks have acted from passion : these monuments belonged to the Latins,

and that of itself was cause sufficient for their proscription. But what do I say?—they belonged to the Latins ! No ; they were the property of the catholic world ; and the destroyers will transmit the shame of this violation and outrage to their latest posterity.

I knew that, at least, Godfrey's sword and his spurs had been saved, and that they were in the possession of the Fathers ; I begged to be shown them. This sword, they consider, and with good reason, as a most valuable treasure. I was conducted, after divine service, to the place where it has rested for eight centuries . . . I looked at it for a long time with respect ; I felt a desire to touch it. I hesitated Did it become me to grasp the sword of him, who, kindling anew the ardour of the ancient faith, rescued from the hands of infidels the tomb of the Son of God ? At last, I could not withstand the impulse to draw it from its scabbard, to examine it, and to raise it to my lips Then, turning towards the Holy Sepulchre, I thrice saluted with it the sacred tomb for which it fought ; and I afterwards saluted with it the spot where lie the ashes of the hero.

The iron hilt of this sword was formerly gilt ; some traces of the gilding are still perceptible. The weapon is very heavy, and very long. The morocco sheath, in which it is kept, is modern ; the good Fathers meant this for an honour, but, in my opinion, it is a disfigurement.

For four or five days past, Jerusalem has been in consternation. The Egyptians are coming to make themselves masters of it. This will be the nineteenth time that it has been taken ; eighteen times it has been pillaged ; what will be its fate now ? The Turks of these parts, and the Arabs, are furious. Those drums, those fifes, those bayonets, now adopted by their enemies, and, in general, every approach to the European military system, are held in abhorrence by them. On the other hand, as the conqueror shows great favour to the Christians, they are apprehensive lest, if they continue subject to him, they may be forced to renounce those vexations of every kind which they conceive that they have a right to exercise, and the practice which they pursue of daily

extorting money from persons destitute of protection, who have no other resource against pillage and murder than the cash in their purses. These apprehensions have become the more serious, in consequence of an order just issued by Ibrahim, enjoining the Christians to refuse immediately all kinds of tribute and exactions.

Is this conduct of Ibrahim's inspired by a laudable feeling of generosity and tolerance? or may it not rather be an artifice to win the Christians, an artifice which may very probably cloak the intention of plundering them by and by? . . . I am afraid so, nay, I believe so. It is my opinion, too, that the convents, that of the Latins in particular, ought not all at once to give up paying the Turks what they have so long paid them; they might pay less, but at any rate it might be well to pay something: for, if Egypt is ever forced to quit Palestine, the extortions would have no bounds, and the imagination could not anticipate anything too terrible as the certain result of a refusal.

Besides, the Holy City is by no means completely reduced; the citadel still holds out, and will not surrender; the commander has declared that all his men will bury themselves under the ruins of the fortress rather than capitulate, unless the arrears of their pay, owing by the Pacha of Acre, are discharged. Then only will they open their gates and submit; but, first of all, the money down. The firing of cannon at intervals proclaims, in fact, their firm resolution to die rather than renounce what is due to them.

In all countries money has a malignant influence: among almost all the nations of the globe, money is become an idol; and, though this metal god has not the power to make men truly happy, it is to him that they everywhere look for happiness.

Nowhere has this baleful deity more altars than in Turkey, and in the countries subject to the Koran; nowhere are more victims immolated to him. The Arab and the Turk sacrifice everything to filthy lucre: with them nothing is more precious than gold, and, if they had no other means of insuring the possession of a tolerable sum than by giving a considerable portion of their life in

exchange for it, I doubt whether they would hesitate long. This remark applies to all, to the high as well as to the low, to the magistrates as well as to private individuals. A man who has just passed sentence on a robber proceeds straightway, and himself lays a convent under contribution, and he pursues this system of plunder till, summoned in his turn before the tribunal of the pacha, he finds himself stripped of his property and obliged to submit his head to the axe of the executioner; and no sooner has that head rolled in the dust, no sooner is the money confiscated, than in comes a messenger from Constantinople, bearing the fatal bowstring, and an order from the sultan to strangle the pacha : I leave you to guess why.

The orders formerly sent by the sultan were so highly respected, that he to whom the fatal cord was brought received it as coming from the Prophet himself : he saw the will of God in that of the Grand Signor, the head of his religion, and had no doubt that if he obeyed immediately, and without a murmur, he should pass forthwith into the enjoyment of everlasting felicity : he was like a lamb which suffered itself to be led to the slaughter. This sentence of death he frequently received during a banquet, an entertainment, amidst his harem, surrounded by his wives and his children. He rose, kissed the firman that decreed his death, lifted it to his head in token of obedience, stepped into the next room, performed the prescribed ablutions, said his prayers, and tendered his neck to the bow-string.

Now-a-days necessity, rather than humanity, has rendered this kind of punishment infinitely more rare, if, however, it has not caused it to be proscribed altogether. Respect for the will of the representative of the Prophet is not now carried to such a length as to insure docility ; and the envoy commissioned to carry the fatal cord, if he were to attempt to perform his errand, might deem himself fortunate if he did not pay with his own head for the hardihood of having undertaken it.

LETTER XVIII.

Departure for Bethlehem—Road—Plain of Raphaim—Greek Monastery of Elijah—Rachel's Tomb—View of Bethlehem—The Holy Grotto.

Bethlehem, January 4th, 1832.

CHRISTMAS approached. The reverend Father warden of the Holy Sepulchre had already gone to Bethlehem with the greater part of the community, for the purpose of celebrating there so important a day on the very spot where the Son of God deigned to be born.

Being urged to share their happiness, I set out on the 23d, at three in the afternoon, accompanied by a dragoon and a janissary. I rode a superb Arab mare, full of spirit ; and yet I only walked her, lest, by a too rapid pace, I should lose the pleasure of observing anything of interest which the country might present for my mind and my heart. Oh ! how different were my feelings from those with which I approached Jerusalem ! Then I was drawing near to a city under a curse, to a city where everything reminds you of the excruciating torments and the ignominious death of the Saviour ; and my afflicted soul beheld there nought save spots stained with the blood of the august victim, or instruments of his cruel execution—a Prætorium, a Calvary, a crown of thorns, whips, nails, a cross !—and I fancied that I could still see and hear a ruthless populace repeatedly shouting “Blood ! blood !” and ferocious executioners bent on spilling blood . . . and what blood, gracious God !!!

But Bethlehem ! All my life, that name of itself had produced in me impressions of a pure joy, of an inexpressible charm. Never had I heard it uttered, never had I uttered it myself, without a sort of thrill : judge then, my dear friend, you who are a Christian, a pious man, judge how much more vivid and delicious must have been the emotions of my soul as I approached it !

“In a few moments my eyes will behold that Bethlehem, the name of which is so dear to me ! They will behold it ! They will behold that stable in which was born the fairest of the sons of men, the ruler of the uni-

verse, the word of life, my Saviour ! They will behold that manger in which he was laid, wrapped in swaddling clothes ; that manger, the only cradle that his mother had to give to such a son ! They will behold the place, whither the shepherds of the neighbouring country, apprized by the voices of the angels, came to adore him ; and that upon which knelt the kings of the East, brought by that miraculous star to pay homage to the King of kings, and to offer him their presents ; and that where Mary, the incomparable mother, suckled her infant, warmed him at her bosom, pressed him to her heart."

Thus did I inwardly say to myself, and with these thoughts which filled my soul were blended the fondest recollections of my childhood, of that age when the reading of the holy Scriptures constituted my chief delight ; when the affecting histories of Abel, of Isaac, of Joseph, of the child Jesus, especially of his having but a handful of straw for his bed, and a stable for his palace, moved me to the bottom of my heart and moistened my eyes with tears ; when a mother, whose name too was Mary, mingled with those admirable narratives the simple commentaries of her piety and her tenderness, rendered sensible to my eyes by means of engravings what my too young understanding alone would not have thoroughly comprehended, answered my little questions, and never appeared more happy than when I dunned her with my innocent curiosity.

The road from Jerusalem to Bethlehem, though not so bad as that from Rama to Jerusalem, is stony and unequal. It is only at long intervals that you meet with cultivated spots ; the olive is the only tree that is seen, and that is very rare.

At the distance of a league and a half, and on the right, my guide pointed out to me the plain of Raphaim, so celebrated on account of the victory gained by David over the Philistines.

About half way is a Greek monastery which bears the name of the Prophet Elijah. It is a paltry building, without anything remarkable. In front of the monastery is a tree, the thick foliage of which shades a stone that, according to tradition, served the prophet for a bed.

Not far thence, on the right, I perceived a small square building surmounted by a dome. "It is the tomb of Rachel," said my dragoman, "It is possible that this monument may have been erected on the spot where Jacob's wife was buried ; but that it dates back to the time of the patriarch, or that he erected any tomb at all for her, may be the more reasonably doubted, inasmuch as the Bible merely says that, on his return from Mesopotamia, when he was near Ephrath, Rachel died, and he buried her on the way to Ephrath. It is evident, moreover, from the mere inspection of the edifice, that it belongs to a much later period.

We pursued our route, and, a few steps farther, on the slope of a hill, that Bethlehem, so dear to my heart, suddenly burst upon my view. In the transport of my joy, I saluted thee, land of Judea, and, borrowing the language of the prophets, I exclaimed ; "Thou art not the least among the cities of Judah ; for from thee shall go forth, and has actually gone forth, the chief of Israel, Jesus my Saviour !"

As we advanced, the view became more lovely and delightful. Bethlehem, seated amidst the hills and the plains which surround it, presented a picturesque prospect : the fields irregularly divided, according to the extent of the different properties, and sometimes inclosed by walls, appeared to me better cultivated ; trees, the fig and the olive especially, were much more frequent. On the one hand, I perceived the mountains of Judea ; on the other, beyond the Dead Sea, those of Arabia Petræa ; the most unimportant objects captivated my whole attention. I stopped, I went forward, I turned back, I looked about, I mustered my recollections. In sight of that blessed land, of those plains, of those hills, I called to mind the rural manners of the patriarchs who dwelt there, their pastoral life, and the charming pictures of it left us in the Scripture. I thought of the ancestors of the Saviour, who had lived in these same parts ; of the boy David, tending his father's flocks ; of Boaz, David's grandfather ; of that admirable Moabite, whose name was destined, by the dispensation of God, to be inscribed in the genealogy of his Son ; of Ruth, gleaning the fields

of him whom heaven decreed for her husband ; that Ruth, whose touching history was well worthy to become one of our canonical books, and for whom religious Poesy has thought that she could never choose colours sufficiently soft and vivid.

It was six o'clock when I reached the monastery where I was expected. I was informed that the most reverend Father warden of the Holy Sepulchre had gone with part of the community as far as Rachel's tomb to meet me. As I had not taken the same road, and had gone first one way and then another, I had not fallen in with him.

I am at Bethlehem ! at Bethlehem ! Amidst the attentions and the testimonies of a tender charity lavished upon me by the monks, my mind was occupied exclusively with one idea : I thought of nothing but the happiness of beholding the sacred Grotto. But a stranger, unacquainted with the monastery, not knowing whether I must apply to the Turks for the keys, in spite of myself I appeared grave, absent and my looks betrayed my fears and my preoccupations. And, besides, I wanted solitude, night, silence, as at the tomb of our Saviour, and on Golgotha. A good Father guessed what was passing within me : seeing me so pensive, " You wish perhaps," said he, " to visit the holy places this evening ?"—" This very evening," I replied, " if there be nothing indiscreet in that wish, but as late as possible and alone."—" Well, wait till the community has retired to rest, and I will come and fetch you." He then accompanied me to the cell which had been prepared for me.

The lights were extinguished one by one in the monastery. In the cloister where my cell was situated, nought was to be heard save the vibration of the pendulum of the clock, and the faint murmur of some of the monks praying beside their beds. Presently, the good Father Joseph came for me. I followed him with a lantern in my hand. We descended the great staircase, passed through several vaulted rooms, and arrived at the church. Turning thence to the right, we proceeded by a staircase cut out of the rock, and very narrow, to a winding way

equally narrow, and still in the rock, where my guide pointed out to me an altar, and told me that beneath it is the tomb of the Holy Innocents. He was then directing my attention to another, when impelled by a pious impatience, "I will look at that another time," said I, in a low tone; "let us proceed." We ascended some steps, and, having gone a few paces farther, we found ourselves before a door, which he hastily opened. I beheld a deep grotto, lighted by a great number of lamps. My guide withdrew . . . and I, my soul moved by fear, respect, love, I entered, I fell on my knees, I prayed, I contemplated, I adored.

And those hours of night, during which I had watched near the manger of the Lamb without spot, reminded me of that night and that hour when the angel of the Lord appeared to the shepherds keeping watch over their flocks, when the glory of the Lord shone round about them, and they were sore afraid. Methought an angel said to me as to them, "Fear not:" I had felt the great joy which had been promised to them, because I was in the city of David, and on that very spot whither I had come to pray was born for me a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord. Like them I had found that sign given by the messenger of the Most High—the stable, the manger, and the infant Jesus wrapped in swaddling clothes. I had felt in my heart his divine presence, which the lapse of time had not permitted me to behold there; I blessed the happy hour of my life when I said: "Let us go to Bethlehem and see."

And I returned glorifying and praising God.

The clock struck two as I got back to my cell.

Glory to God, my dear friend, glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good-will towards men! Amen!

LETTER XIX.

Bethlehem—The Monastery—Churches—Description of the Sacred Grotto—St. Jerome—St. Paula and her Daughter Eustochium—Sanctuary of the Nativity—The Manger—The Magi—Solemn Procession at Midnight.

Bethlehem, January 9th, 1832.

HAS it not sometimes happened to you, my friend, in treating of what is dear to you, that you have noted down your thoughts, your feelings; your remarks, that you have delineated places, persons, things; much less intent on arranging your ideas than on recording the impressions which you have received, and giving full scope to the effusions of your heart, without knowing when to finish? Such is the predicament in which I am in regard to Bethlehem: if you find reason to complain of my prolixity, I hope at least to interest you by the details.

Bethlehem is situated in the centre of Judea, about two leagues from Jerusalem. It was called in Hebrew Beth-Lechem, a name given to it by Abraham, signifying house of bread. It was likewise called Ephrata, fruitful, after Caleb's wife. It was in allusion to the meaning of these two names that St. Paula, on reaching the place which bore them, exclaimed, full of joy: "I salute thee, Bethlehem, true house of bread, where was born the bread that came down from heaven! I salute thee, Ephrata, fertile land, where God came into the world!"

Bethlehem was likewise called City of David, because it was the birth-place of that prince, one of the ancestors of Jesus Christ, and the most illustrious of the kings of Israel. Lastly, it is sometimes designated in Scripture as Bethlehem of Judah, to distinguish it from another Bethlehem, situated in Galilee, dependent on the tribe of Zebulon, but in no way remarkable.

I will not conceal from you, my dear friend, that the surname of Ephrata, given to Bethlehem, as well as to its environs, has drawn a smile of pity from some *philosophic* travellers by whom it has been visited. They

had before their eyes the real causes of the deplorable state in which they found a land, whose fertility is attested by the ancient historians most worthy of credit ; but, misled by their prepossessions against Christianity, they have deemed it more *philosophic* to find fault with the soil itself for its present sterility, than with the oppressors who enchain it, who mutilate the arms necessary for its cultivation, and scarcely leave to the wretched, haggard, and emaciated inhabitants the scanty resources obtained by a toil with which they are more and more disgusted by the abject servitude to which they are reduced. The truth is, that, at the present day, in places cleared of briars and stones, the soil is extremely fertile. Figs and grapes abound there, and are delicious ; everything thrives there.

The first house in which I set foot on my arrival in Bethlehem, was, as I have told you, the monastery. It is a very extensive structure, the walls of which, built of enormous stones, exhibit, in their height and thickness, the appearance of a fortress. The door is so narrow, and so low, that you are forced to stoop and to squeeze yourself through. It has been made thus to render it more difficult for the Arabs to penetrate into the building, and to prevent several of them from entering at once—a precaution the more necessary in this country, as the people fall foul of the monks, especially when they are burdened by any new impost. They then see no other means of ridding themselves of it, than by throwing the weight of it on the unfortunate Fathers.

The monastery is divided into three parts, occupied separately by the Greeks, the Armenians, and the Catholics. The church is contiguous to the courtyard of the monastery.

On this spot, the first Christians had built a chapel, in which was enclosed the stable where our Saviour came into the world. They thronged thither from all parts, to adore, on that very spot, Him, who humbled himself so low, as to take the form of a little child, out of love to us. For the purpose of driving away the believers, and holding up their mysteries to the derision of the pagans, the emperor Adrian caused a statue to be erected there

to Adonis, and instituted in honour of him a particular worship, which subsisted till the reign of Constantine. Helena, the mother of that prince, during the sojourn in the Holy Land, added to the immense benefits by which she had already signalized her piety that of causing the infamous idol to be demolished, and the worship of it to be forbidden ; and, through her means, arose, on the same spot, the church which at this day bears the name of Mary.

This church, though it has undergone great alterations and been frequently repaired, still bears unequivocal marks of its ancient and glorious origin. It is built in the form of a cross, and adorned with forty-eight marble columns of the Corinthian order. The Greeks and the Armenians have possessed themselves of it, as of many other places which belonged to the Latins ; and their gold, profusely dispensed to the pacha of Damascus and the Porte, now secures to them the peaceful occupation.

The principal nave is separated from the choir and the transept by a thick wall. It belongs to the Greeks and the Armenians, who hold divine service there. The other parts are extremely neglected, no service being ever performed in them. The pavement is in such a wretched condition, that you cannot walk upon it without running the risk of dangerous falls. On the walls are to be seen some paintings, which appear to date back to the infancy of the art among us, and a few fragments of shattered mosaics.

Close to St. Mary's, there is another church, called St. Catherine's, which belongs to the Catholics. It is far too small for the number of the congregation. Its principal ornament is an excellent organ, which I frequently go to play upon ; and with the more pleasure, since the harmony of that instrument adds greatly, in my opinion, to the tenderness of the emotions that one feels, particularly at Bethlehem.

Through this church the Catholics now pass to the sacred grotto, instead of going the way which they formerly took. The continual cavils which the Greeks and the Armenians are incessantly raising against our good Fathers of the Holy Land, have given occasion to this

change and to some others. I beg you to bear this in mind, my dear friend, that you may not be surprised if my account differs in some points from what you may have read in other travellers.

Oh ! that I could now transfuse, in some measure, my soul into your's, with the thoughts, the affections, the feelings wherewith it is filled by the presence of all that I have the favour to behold ! Collect yourself, prepare your heart ; I am about to usher you into a grotto, where the profane man perceives, it is true, such objects only as he deems worthy of his contempt—a stable, a manger, an infant, poor, and almost deserving of pity ! But for Christians—and heaven has granted us the grace to be so—for Christians, that stable is a temple, that manger a sanctuary, that infant a Saviour, a God ; a God, before whom the empires, which, to our petty vision, appear so vast, are scarcely what an atom of dust is to us ; and those kings and those nations, who so fiercely dispute a title belonging, by right, to Him alone, who are bent on being sovereigns, even without his grace—make a little noise to-day, gather a little of what they term glory, merely to lose it to-morrow, and to die ; and those men who call themselves learned, who cry aloud that their knowledge, their discoveries, their doctrines, their wisdom, their genius, are the only light capable of really enlightening the world, are nought but ignorance and darkness, understanding nothing of the things of heaven, and plunging with their paltry science, like all the rest of mankind, into the night of the grave !

From St. Catherine you descend by a staircase, where two persons meeting would have difficulty to pass one another, and which is lighted by only two lamps, placed one before a picture of the Virgin Mary, the other before that of St. Francis.

At the bottom, on the right, a short passage leads to the altar of Eusebius, and thence to two others, which face each other, and are consecrated ; the one to St. Paula, the other to St. Eustochium. Farther on is the principal part of the grotto of St. Jerome, which has been transformed into a chapel, that is likewise dedicated to him. Here it was that the illustrious recluse passed a great

portion of his life ; here it was that he fancied he heard the peals of that awful trump, which shall one day summon all mankind to judgment, incessantly ringing in his ears ; here it was that with a stone he struck his body, bowed by the weight of years and austerities, and, with loud cries, besought mercy of the Lord ; and here, too, it was that he produced those laborious works, which have justly earned him the title of Father of the Church.

The two pictures of St. Jerome, which adorn this grotto, are tolerable ; but that of the little altar is defective in the proportions ; the head is expressive, the body a great deal too small.

As for pictures, there are few that have struck me so much as that of St. Paula and her daughter Eustochium. It does not appear to me, it is true, to be by a very able pencil, but it has powerful effect. It represents those two saints in the same coffin. It is a touching idea of the painter's, as M. de Chateaubriand has aptly remarked, to have given a perfect resemblance to the mother and the daughter ; youth, a white veil, and a crown of roses, are the only marks that distinguish one from the other. I should say, however, if I were permitted to have an opinion on such matters, that there is too much luxury, too much affectation, in the dress. They were descended, it is true, from Scipio ; they possessed immense wealth ; but their favourite virtues were Christian humility and simplicity, and it is moreover to be observed that Eustochium died superior of a monastery at Bethlehem.

Leaning against a piece of rock in this dark grotto, I looked steadfastly at this picture, lighted only by the flame of my torch, which I had set upon the altar ; and the silence, the solitude of the place, filled my soul with a religious awe. I had before my eyes the image of two persons of large fortune, of a name still renowned, and who, taught by faith, had renounced the honours, the joys, which the world could promise them, in the high rank in which they were placed, and had forsaken all for the one thing needful, for salvation. "Happy mother !" said I, to myself, "to have comprehended, and to have made her daughter comprehend, how short-lived are pleasures, since life itself is of such brief duration ! Happy daughter,

to have listened to the lessons, to have followed the example of so worthy a mother ! Happy, too, to have chosen for a spouse Him whose tenderness, like his life, is never-ending, and with whom one is assured of happiness as long as eternity !” And then my thoughts soaring from these subterranean vaults and from the contemplation of their tomb, to heaven, I saw them bearing immortal palms, the prize of their courage and perseverance, and crowned with glory.

Do not infer, my dear friend, from this language, that I would have all young Christian females retire from the world and bury themselves alive in solitude. Society needs for its happiness, still more than for the honour and the glory of religion, wives, mothers, like St. Paula, as well as virgins consecrated to God, like St. Eustochium. But, I confess to you, that, at the foot of that coffin of the two saints, I could not suppress the wish that certain mothers, whom the world seduces with its profane assemblies, its dances, its promenades, its concerts, its festivities ; who expose to looks, rarely chaste, the youth, the graces of their daughters, bedizened and crowned with flowers ; I could not, I say, suppress the wish that such mothers had in their house a copy of this picture to assist them to comprehend, and to teach their children to comprehend, that beauty fades as quickly as the flower whose lustre it possesses ; that friendships cease, that reputation is frail as glass, that riches pass away, that sports, and smiles, and pleasures, are mingled with sorrows, often very poignant, and always end in regrets ; that, in short, amidst the world, as well as aloof from the world, there is nothing solid and durable but virtue.

To go to the sacred grotto, we must turn back from the point where we now are. You pass the altar, beneath which is the sepulchre of the Holy Innocents, which I have already mentioned. This is the spot, where, according to tradition, were interred the children of Bethlehem, whom Herod doomed to die.

“Then Herod,” says the Evangelists, “seeing that he was mocked of the wise men, was exceeding wroth, and sent forth and slew all the children that were in Bethlehem and in all the coasts thereof, from two years old

and under, according to the time which he had diligently inquired of the wise men.

“Then was fulfilled that which was spoken by Jeremie the prophet, saying :

“In Rama was there a voice heard, lamentation, and weeping, and great mourning, Rachel weeping for her children, and would not be comforted because they were not.”

On ascending a few steps, you come to a door which leads to the subterraneous chapel of the holy grotto. It is thirty-eight feet long, eleven wide, and nine high ; two flights of fifteen steps each, constructed on the sides, lead one to the church of the Greeks, the other to that of the Armenians. The rocks and the pavement are covered with a costly marble given by St. Helena. Thirty-two lamps burn without interruption in this sacred place, to which the light of day never penetrates. At the farther end, towards the east, is the spot where the Virgin brought forth the Saviour of the world. This spot, lighted by sixteen lamps, is marked by a slab of white marble, fixed in the pavement, and lined with jasper, in the centre of which is a silver sun, surrounded with this inscription :—

HIC DE VIRGINE MARIA
JESUS CHRISTUS NATUS EST.

Over it is a marble table, serving for an altar, and supported by two pillars. Under this altar, and between the two pillars, you stoop to kiss the sacred spot designated by the inscription.

A little lower down, towards the south, is the manger.

“And Joseph also went up from Galilee, out of the city of Nazareth, into Judea, unto the city of David, which is called Bethlehem, because he was of the house and lineage of David,

“To be taxed with Mary, his espoused wife, being great with child.

“And so it was that, while they were there, the days were accomplished that they should be delivered.

“And she brought forth her first-born son, and wrapped

him in swaddling clothes, and laid him in a manger, because there was no room for them in the inn."

Facing the manger, and three paces from it, is the spot where Mary was sitting with the infant Jesus in her arms, when the wise men came to worship him, and to present their gifts to him.

"Now when Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judea, in the days of Herod, the king, behold there came wise men from the east to Jerusalem,

"Saying, Where is he that is born King of the Jews? - for we have seen his star in the east, and are come to worship him

"And lo! the star which they saw in the east went before them, till it came and stood over where the young child was.

"When they saw the star, they rejoiced with exceeding great joy.

"And when they were come into the house, they saw the young child with Mary, his mother, and fell down and worshipped him: and when they had opened their treasures, they presented unto him gifts, gold, and frankincense, and myrrh."

The manger is raised about a foot above the level of the grotto, and lined with white marble. At the back, a tolerably good painting, in a silver frame, represents the adoration of the shepherds. It covers the bare rock. It is removed on Christmas-day, and the rock is left exposed for some time to the view and the veneration of the pious. On this occasion it is cleaned by the Father guardian, who reverently collects the little bits that drop off. I shall bring with me some of them, for which I am indebted to his kindness.

The Christian princes have made it a duty to send presents for the embellishment of the manger. It is always hung with magnificent draperies; those for this week are of white silk, sprinkled with roses, and embroidered with gold. On the spot where the wise men worshipped Jesus is an altar, with a fine painting representing the Adoration, and above it a large star.

The sanctuary of the Nativity belongs to the Greeks;

the manger and the place of the adoration of the wise men, to the Catholics.

I never enter this august grotto but with a taper in my hand, as when I visited Calvary and the Holy Sepulchre. When, kneeling before the spot where our Lord was born, I cast my eyes on these words : *HIC DE VIRGINE MARIA JESUS CHRISTUS NATUS EST.*—"Here Jesus was born of the Virgin Mary"—there arises within me a feeling totally distinct and different from that produced by other acts of Christian piety. To the believer the word *Here* has a charm, an attraction, a captivation, which cannot be either felt or comprehended but on the spot. The soul, the heart, all the faculties, are spell-bound by that word ; you repeat it a thousand times, and, when you have repeated it for the thousandth time, you pronounce it again : it is incessantly on the burning lips of gratitude and love.

There is in fact no place in the world where the heart can be more deliciously moved than in this grotto at Bethlehem. When, calling to mind the time, the season of the year, when the poor infant Jesus was born. I add, while communing with myself : "*HERE* is the spot ;" methinks I hear him weeping with cold and want ; methinks I see Mary, his fond mother, bestowing upon him all the cares of the most ingenious tenderness ; Joseph, on hearing the cry of his adopted son, hastening to take him from the arms of his mother, to clasp him in his own, and to warm him on his bosom ; and these ideas fill my soul with ineffable sentiments, which my pen would strive in vain to describe. I pray, I sigh ; I lift towards heaven my eyes swimming in tears ; I murmur the sacred name of Jesus, and the names of Mary and Joseph ; and I bless the thrice gracious God for having, in his mercy, given me his son for my Saviour ; I bless him, too, for having given me a soul that is touched, softened, penetrated, by such incomprehensible bounty.

You know, my dear friend, with what pomp, with what joy, the festival of Christmas and the midnight mass are celebrated throughout the whole Catholic world : you have had occasion, like me, to remark the beauty of the decorations which adorn our temples at the time of this

great solemnity, and the immense concourse of the faithful, and their pious solicitude to go on and worship the infant Jesus, and that unanimous concert of praise and thanksgiving for the happy advent of the divine Messiah, and those songs and hymns in which the general joy bursts forth. Conceive then what must be such a festival, such a service, held at midnight at Bethlehem, on the very spot where Jesus deigned to be born. I will not repeat here what you may have seen elsewhere. I will not stop to describe the holy magnificence displayed at this solemnity ; I will say nothing either of the rich tapestries with which the marbles are covered, or of the ravishing strains of a music in perfect harmony with the sublimity and the soothing nature of the mystery, or of the countless tapers which burn not only upon the altar, but in the whole of the interior, or of the pomp that surrounds the reverend Father warden in the exercise of his functions, or of the ornaments sparkling with gold which attest the munificence of the Catholic princes of other days, and are worn by the numerous priests who assist in the service—but I will say a few words to you concerning one august and impressive ceremony which cannot be performed anywhere but here : that is a solemn procession to the manger, with which the service commences.

At midnight, at that hour of salvation, when, in all the Catholic churches in the world, the infant Jesus receives the homage of all faithful Christians, the reverend Father warden opens the procession, and advances with slow step, his head bowed, and reverentially carrying in his arms the infant Jesus. On reaching the very spot of the nativity, the deacon, with deep devotion, chants the gospel. When he comes to the words—"and wrapped him in swaddling clothes"—he receives the infant from the hands of the Father warden, wraps him in swaddling clothes, lays him in the manger, falls on his knees, and worships At that moment, my friend, there flashes into the soul something supernatural, I may venture to call it, judging from what I have witnessed, from what I have myself felt. Piety ceases to find a voice to express

its gratitude, its love ; it speaks only in the melting language of the eyes, in sighs, and in tears.

Farewell, my dear friend ; I lay down the pen, hoping that my letter may impart to you some little portion of my happiness at Bethlehem ; you would be, at least for a moment, in a sort of paradise. Once more, farewell.

LETTER XX.

Inhabitants of Bethlehem—Women—Houses—Costumes—Marriages—Manners—History of a Widow—Funerals—Bawling—Anecdotes on that subject.

Bethlehem, January 15, 1832.

MY last letter, my dear friend, related to the matters most interesting to my heart, and no doubt to your's.

Alas ! the more happy I find myself in the seclusion of the monastery, with the good Fathers—in the sacred grotto—in the subterraneous chapels—at the foot of the numerous altars raised upon a spot of prodigies and miracles—so much the more, when outside of it, am I filled with melancholy and compassion at the sight of the deplorable state in which the birth-place of my Saviour, that city which my faith renders so precious and so dear to me, is at this day.

Bethlehem was, from the very earliest times, a considerable town. Rehoboam, the fourth king of Jerusalem, enlarged and embellished it by the erection of important buildings there. Now-a-days it retains not even a shadow of its past splendour and beauty. It is but a confused assemblage of houses, or rather ruins, the abodes of indigence and servitude. These houses are square, like those at Jaffa and Rama. The staircase is outside, and the roof is terraced.

The Bethlehemites are descended from the tribe of Judah. The population is composed of eighteen hun-

dred Catholics, the like number of Greeks, perhaps fifty Armenians, and about one hundred and forty Turks. The number is accurate : I had it from the Catholic priests, and I wish more particularly to call your attention to it, because most travellers have fallen into strange mistakes on this point : some of them have even limited the Christian population to one hundred souls.

Under any other government the inhabitants of Bethlehem would be in easy, and even in affluent, circumstances : but, as it is, they are every moment crushed by fresh impositions. I have already told you by what means they contrive to escape utter ruin, and, at the same time, to satisfy their oppressors. The good Fathers are sometimes forced to avoid by flight the ill-usage to which they are then liable ; they had found themselves under this cruel necessity three or four weeks before my arrival. I have been told that a Father warden, a Portuguese, who had been seized by the Turks and threatened with death, made no other reply to their furious speeches than these words : " You have it in your power to hang me, if such is your pleasure ; but, as for money, none will you have, because we have none." He held the same language, even with the rope about his neck. This firmness saved him, and gained him his liberty.

The conviction of these unfortunate creatures, that the principal fruit of their toils would go to the tyrants who oppress them, completely disgusts them with labour, and keeps them in an idleness, for which they only seek pretexts, and these never fail them. Among these pretexts must be reckoned the great number of festivals which they are in the habit of keeping. Their slothful devotion is not content with the repose of those days during which the church forbids all servile work ; they *keep holy* in the same manner a multitude of others, and all the remonstrances of the Holy See on this head have been absolutely useless. I do not recollect that any sight ever filled me with more horror and disgust than that of these people, scantily covered with scattered rags, parading their indolence in a public place, or seated close to some ruinous building, employed in ridding themselves of the vermin which eat them up, and imagining that they are doing a

thing well pleasing to God in not touching tools or implements, by means of which they might, without the violation of any law, secure for themselves a less miserable existence.

The children follow in every respect the example of their parents : nowhere have I seen the rising generation so idle. At all hours, with the exception of those when they are at school, and everywhere, you meet with troops of them romping, playing, fighting, giving way to all the turbulence of their age. The Fathers of the Holy Land, whose alms are altogether immense, not only pay masters to teach them, but feed them besides—well aware that the only reward which they have to expect for this benefit, sooner or later, is ingratitude, provoked by excessive distress.

The principal, if not the only occupation of the people of these parts consists in the fabrication of chaplets, crucifixes, and other objects of religious reverence which are purchased by the pilgrims. These things were formerly cheap ; but their price has risen considerably, owing to the greatly increased number of Greeks and Armenians who now go on pilgrimage to the holy places ; and also since the Turks have taken a fancy to carry a sort of chaplet, which seems to have become an essential complement of their costume, and of which they make a sort of toy that they play with even in the streets.

The real wealth of the Bethlehemite, and upon the whole of every Arab of these parts, consists in his wife ; she is his treasure, his strength, his support, and, unfortunately, he knows not her value ; he makes her his beast of burden. Nowhere have I seen women work so hard as at Bethlehem ; nay, I could not have believed that so weak and so delicate a creature was capable of such fatigue, had I not witnessed it myself. Within doors she has everything to do.

As the reservoirs and the canals which supply Bethlehem, as well as Jerusalem, with water, are in ruins and dry eleven months in the year, the women are obliged to go a league to fetch what they want for household use, and to bring it back themselves in skins. Add to this, the toil of climbing steep hills under their burden, and

then say, my dear friend, if it be possible to suppress a painful feeling, especially when you consider that this task is to be performed three or four times a week.

A few days since, I was taking a walk outside the town with the *curé*. About three-quarters of a mile from it, we met with a young girl returning with her provision. She had set down her skin upon a fragment of rock, and was standing beside it, out of breath, and wiping the perspiration from her face. Curious to know the weight of the skin, I begged her to put it on my shoulders; my request astonished her not a little; she nevertheless complied very cheerfully. It was as much as I could do to take a few steps under the burden. "Poor thing!" said I, as I threw it down, looking at the *curé*, "how old is she? not more than sixteen, I dare say."—"Sixteen!" said he; "she is not thirteen;" and, addressing her in Arabic, he asked: "How old are you, my girl?"—"Twelve, sir." I took from my pocket some pieces of money, which I handed to her, and which she accepted with a lively demonstration of joy.

But to go so far for water is not the only task of the poor Bethlehemites. The town is destitute of wood, nor is any to be found nearer than some leagues: it is the women who are obliged to provide this also. But what wrings one's heart, and, I must confess, makes my blood boil, is to see these wretched, worn-down, emaciated creatures, having misery stamped on their faces, sinking beneath their loads, passing in sight of their husbands, listlessly seated in the public square, smoking or chatting by way of pastime, while not a thought ever enters the head of any of these heartless husbands to relieve his partner of her burden, and to carry for her, at least from that spot to his home, what she has had to bring whole leagues.

Is this all? No, my friend. At night, with this wood, which has cost such toil, she is obliged to heat the water brought from such a distance; she has to wash the feet of that man, then to cook his supper, then to wait upon him standing—upon him and his eldest son—without taking the least share in the meal, and to wait till they have done, before she can step aside to eat by herself what they

have left The pen drops from my fingers. Is it possible that a sex so worthy of all the cares, of all the attentions, of all the affection of man, can be thus treated by man? is it possible that she can be thus treated by man, who carries him in her bosom, who brings him forth with pain, who suckles him with her milk, who warms him on her heart, who rocks him upon her knees, who guides his first steps, who strives by education to transfuse into him all that is gentle and kind, who delights to throw a charm over his life, who shares his sorrows, who best knows how to soothe his woes, to comfort him, to nurse him in illness and infirmity, to lighten and sometimes to embellish his old age, and to perform for him, until his last moment, services of which any other courage, any other devotedness, any other love, would be incapable? and that at Bethlehem!

Several of these men are occasionally brought to the monastery by business which they have to transact with the monks. Some of them understand Italian. I have talked to them. I shall not repeat to you what too just an indignation prompted me to say.

The consequence of scarcity of water, in a country where rain is not frequent, is extreme filthiness, which renders poverty more hideous: the people rarely wash themselves any more than the linen and the rags which constitute their garments: everything about them is disgusting. The women, in general remarkable for regularity of features, are the first victims of this miserable condition: nastiness fades and withers such charms as they do possess.

With the exception of one or two houses, this poverty, this excessive filthiness, are to be found everywhere. I will tell you, without the least exaggeration, what I have myself seen.

I went one day to visit one of the most respectable families in the town. Through a passage, disgustingly dirty, I came to a vaulted room without windows: it received no light but by the doorway, the only aperture at which the smoke of the hearth and the stove could escape; the walls were blackened by it. At the entrance I found two brothers busily employed in making little

articles of piety out of mother-of-pearl ; farther on, the wife of one of them was suckling an infant, and near her was her husband's mother, suckling one also ; she was surrounded by three other young children. Two cradles were the whole of the furniture. A short conversation ensued with one of the brothers. " Where do you sleep, my friend ?"—" In this room with my wife."—" And your father and mother ?"—" Here, too."—" And your little brothers ?"—" They are always with us."—" But I see no bed."—" That blanket which hangs yonder is mine, that belongs to my father and mother ; at night, we spread them on the floor, and sleep on them."—" But all these fowls—where do they sleep ?"—" In this little corner." The fowls had, in fact, a lodging in the same apartment.

Such a domestic establishment, no doubt, surprises you, my dear friend. Your astonishment will cease when you know that the means by which, as I have told you, the Bethlehemites contrive to satisfy the rapacity of the pachas are not always successful, that frequently they fail. At such times, fathers, mothers, wives, children, the aged, must all flee, and thus each has the less difficulty to carry with him in his flight the little that he possesses.

May we venture to hope that, under the Egyptian government, an end will be put to this state of things ? I dare not believe so. To me there seems every reason to apprehend that, under a form less cruel in appearance, the old oppression will continue without abatement : the shirt will not be stripped from the back ; but it will be taken away all the same.

The dress of the Bethlehemites, if we may believe the general opinion, is as nearly as possible what it was in the time of our Lord. That of the women, both in the town and in the environs, particularly struck me. They are dressed in precisely the same manner as the Virgin Mary in the pictures which represent her ; not only the fashion of the garments, but the very colours, are the same : a blue gown and red cloak, or a red gown and blue cloak, and a white veil over all. The first time that I chanced to see, at a distance, a woman of Bethlehem,

carrying a little child in her arms, I could not help starting; methought I beheld Mary and the infant Jesus coming towards me.

On another occasion, my emotion was not less lively: I perceived an old man, with white hair, and white beard, driving an ass along the hill on which Bethlehem is situated; he was followed by a young female, dressed in blue and red, and covered with a white veil. I was at Bethlehem; imagination carried me back to the time of Augustus Cæsar. In a moment, it transformed those two persons into Joseph and Mary, coming, in obedience to the orders of the prince, to be taxed.

The dress of the country-people also awakens in the mind touching reflections: it is, I am assured, exactly the same as that of the shepherds at the time of our Saviour's birth, and dates back upwards of two thousand years. It is a sort of smock-frock or tunic, drawn tight round the waist by a leathern thong, and a cloak over that. No shoes: people in general go barefoot.

A singular practice prevails here relative to marriages. Parents are accustomed to promise their children, when they are but two years old, one year old, or even younger.

A Catholic Arab said to me, a few days since, rubbing his hands for joy: "I have just promised my daughter; it is an excellent match for her." "How old is she?" "A fortnight." "And her intended?" "Four years." "I have doubly to congratulate you; never in my life do I recollect to have heard of a more innocent couple."

The father of the male child buys the girl; he bargains about the price, and pays down part of it immediately, by way of earnest. In our European countries, parents could not settle their daughters respectably in life, unless they were to give them a portion: here, on the contrary, as you see, the father is paid for his daughter, so that the more children of the female sex he has, the richer he is. How often have I not already heard the expression: "My wife cost me so much . . . 'tis a high price." In conversing with the workmen who made chaplets and other things for me, I have frequently asked this question: "How much did your wife cost you?"

and those to whom I addressed it answered it immediately and with the greatest sincerity. "I paid eight hundred piastres for mine," said one of them, one day. "And what was the price of your mother?" I proceeded. "Four hundred piastres."—"That is very low in comparison."—"But, Father, the piastre was worth more than it is now."

I ought not, however, to omit to say that part of the money is expended by those who receive it, in purchasing clothes for the affianced damsel.

Notwithstanding this traffic, there is not a country in the world where the manners are more pure than at Bethlehem and at Jerusalem. The conduct of the females, married and single, is so irreproachable, that no instance is known of any of those crimes, which licentiousness and debauchery, favoured by irreligion, have rendered too frequent among us, being discovered and proved. The most terrible death is always the punishment of the slightest violation of chastity. Wo even to those over whom any serious suspicion hovers ! On this point the Bethlehemites are inflexible : they must have blood to wipe away disgrace.

I intended at first to leave buried in silence the following story, of which I cannot think without shuddering, and which my hand still hesitates to record ; but it ought, I think, to be introduced into a picture of Palestine.

Nine or ten years ago, a young Turk was seen in one of the neighbouring grottoes. Unluckily, the young widow of a Catholic Bethlehemite, celebrated for her beauty, was there also. Those who had found them having spread the tidings through the town, the Turk fled : the young woman, alarmed, had time to seek refuge in the convent of the Holy Land. Having sought her in vain where she no longer was, the Bethlehemites at length discovered her retreat. They immediately repaired tumultuously to the monastery. They found the door locked ; but this too feeble barrier fell before their fury. The crowd rushed in, and there was the victim, face to face with those who were bent on sacrificing her. In vain the good monks formed a rampart

for her with their bodies ; in vain they extended to the infuriated assailants their supplicating hands ; in vain they besought, they conjured them, in the name of the God of mercy, who was born but a few paces off, to save sinners, not to spill the blood of an unfortunate fellow-creature, whose guilt was not proved ; in vain some of them threw themselves at their feet and grasped their knees, while others strove to repel force by force : they were vanquished in this combat of charity, and the young widow, with dishevelled hair, stricken with horror, beside herself, was dragged by the murderous troop to the public place.

Here commenced a new scene, the very idea of which makes me shudder with horror, and which my hand cannot describe without trembling. Surrounded by her executioners, the hapless widow cried aloud for mercy : she wished to say a few words to clear herself from suspicion Her brothers, her father, were there ; she perceived them, called them ; but that father, those brothers, showed themselves most intent upon her destruction " Father ! father ! for God's sake, recollect that to you I owe my existence ! My brothers, can you forget that we are sprung from the same mother ? " Useless appeal ! she sank swooning ; her eyes closed ; she appeared lifeless. All at once they opened once more, to see her brothers following the terrible example of paternal wrath. All of them then steeped their hands in her blood, and the family deemed that it has thus washed away the stain which would have covered it for ever. The palpitating corse of the murdered woman was torn in pieces by the populace.

Funerals never take place at Bethlehem without certain absurd practices which are derived from paganism. On the day of interment, the women assemble to weep, to dance, to leap, to shriek all at once, on the grave of the deceased. On certain days of the month in which the death happened, they return to the cemetery, and there repeat their contortions, their screams, and their tears. To see them, you would take them for witches. One alone speaks for the space of two minutes, while the others listen in silence. When she stops, at a certain

sign the gesticulations and shrieks are renewed, and continued till weariness obliges them to desist. I have sometimes requested the *curés*, who are perfect masters of the Arabic, to explain to me what they say : but they have assured me that it is a language of their own, and that it is not understood even by their husbands. They added that all their preaching, all their remonstrances, have failed to put an end to this ridiculous and detestable custom.

Like almost all the Arabs, the Bethlehemites have a loud and most disagreeable tone of voice ; you would suppose that they were always quarrelling or in a passion. You hear two persons talking, as it were, both at once, and shouting with all their might ; you ask your interpreter what is the matter, and whether they are going to fight. One of them has asked : "What o'clock is it ?" and the other replied : "I cannot tell." These cries are uttered with such incredible volubility and in so shrill a tone as almost to split one's ears. It is at church that this practice is most annoying, especially when the congregation is numerous. All of them then speak at once, as though they were in the public street. To no purpose the Father warden and the *curé* may preach and exert themselves ; their efforts are vain ; if by chance they obtain one day some degree of silence, you may predict with certainty that the noise will begin again on the next. The pilgrim cannot get used to this scandal.

Relative to the behaviour of the Arabs in church, a singular circumstance happened on the festival of St. Thomas of Canterbury ; it passed in the presence of five hundred witnesses, and yet you would perhaps scarcely believe it, did you not know my veracity.

On the preceding day, the feast of the Holy Innocents, the reverend Father warden of the Holy Land had confirmed the young boys of Bethlehem, who were very numerous. The same ceremony for the females was fixed for the following day, and there had not been one of them at church, but a great concourse of men attended. They made a frightful noise ; the uproar never was greater.

Next day, the women and the girls came in their turn for confirmation. The Father warden had directed that

they should be exclusively admitted. No heed was paid to this order. The multitude, composed of Catholics, Greeks, and Turks, was much greater than on the preceding day, and the tumult raised was in the like proportion. The *curé* addressed them, but in vain. The reverend Father, to show his displeasure, suspended the ceremony, and thus obtained a momentary silence ; but the noise presently began again : again the Father paused, declaring that it was impossible for him to proceed. I was in the gallery and upon thorns. At length I rose, and cried with all my might in Arabic, *Oskot !* Silence ! All eyes instantly turned about, and perceiving a man of lofty stature, clad completely in white, with a long bushy beard, they were all struck mute with surprise. Darting down among them, I directed the doors to be opened, and ordered them to quit the church forthwith. Never did I see anything like the scene that ensued. All rushed towards the door as if panic-struck, each striving to get out first. Possessing considerable strength, I pushed forward the hindmost, who seemed to lag ; the church was cleared and the ceremony was finished in quiet.

This victory cost me but the trouble of keeping my arm uplifted for a few moments, and the courage to pronounce a few words with energy. It was curious to see all those turbans, those black beards, those hideous faces, those sabres, those daggers, fleeing before a pilgrim and one or two monks who had come to his assistance. I stationed myself at the door, and declared that not a creature should be readmitted. I have since remarked much more order and decency, especially on New-year's eve and day. This state of things is kept up even at low mass, when I do not suffer the least noise. All are silent the moment they see me.

LETTER XXI.

Reservoirs of David—Pools of Solomon—Grotto of Milk—Village of the Shepherds—Well of the Virgin Mary—Place where the Shepherds heard the Voices of the Angels—Tekoa—Labyrinth—Hill of the French.

Bethlehem, January 21st, 1832.

I EMPLOY my days, my dear friend, in visiting the most remarkable places in the environs. When the excursions are long, I mount my horse very early, accompanied by several monks and an escort of Arabs of Bethlehem, armed—a needful precaution against the perils to which you are exposed under the present circumstances of Palestine, especially in the gorges of the mountains bordering the Dead Sea, where you have always reason to apprehend that you may fall in with the Bedouins.

The reservoirs of David, formerly contiguous to the gates of the town, are now a thousand paces distant from it, owing to the destruction of its ancient edifices, and the successive decrease of the population. They were lined at bottom with lead. One of them bears more especially the name of the prophet-king.

These reservoirs remind you at once of the victory gained by that prince over the Philistines in the plain of Raphaim, which I have already told you that I saw on my right coming from Jerusalem, and his glorious refusal, though parched with thirst, to drink of the water which three brave men of his army had, at the risk of their lives, fetched for him through the midst of the enemy. “God forbid,” said he, “that I should do this thing: it would seem to me as though I drank the blood of those valiant men”—remarkable words, which it is impossible not to admire, when one knows the heat of the climate, and the excessive thirst which it causes, especially after the fatigues of a long combat.

As I have just made mention of water, I will tell you, by the way, that the water of the reservoir of the monastery at Bethlehem is delicious. When poured out, you would take it for the purest crystal; every drop is like a diamond. That of the reservoir at Jerusalem is superior

even to that. Never have I seen or drunk any so limpid. Would you believe that at table I have frequently suspended my repast, to enjoy the pleasure of looking at it, so extraordinary does its beauty appear to me?

About a league from Bethlehem are the ponds of Solomon, "the pools of water," which that prince enumerates among the great works which he wrought to make himself happy, and which, in the sequel, he could not look at without suffering this confession to escape from his heart—this confession, which all those who, in seeking happiness, seek it elsewhere than of God, will make in all ages, if they are sincere :

"Then I looked on all the works that my hands had wrought, and on the labour that I had laboured to do, and behold, all was vanity and vexation of spirit, and there was no profit under the sun."

These ponds have been excavated in the bosom of hills of difficult access. There are three situated one above another, so that the superabundance of the highest basin runs into that which is immediately below it. They supply Jerusalem and Bethlehem with water. Unfortunately, the canals are ruined in many places, and hence the necessity, so arduous for the women of Bethlehem, to fetch it from a great distance. It would be easy to repair the mischief at a small expense. But what cares the pacha, who comes to his pachalik merely to oppress the inhabitant, to wrest from him his last farthing—what cares such a man, I say, whether everything goes to ruin or not? He leaves repairs for his successor, and his successor for the governor who shall come after him; meanwhile monuments fall from age, buildings crumbled to dust, the oppressed emigrate, or stay but to suffer; everything languishes; everything decays, everything perishes.

These extensive ponds evidently bear the stamp of the most remote antiquity; and the most obstinate incredulity could not dispute with Solomon the glory of having constructed them. They are partly hewn out of the rock, and must have cost immense labour. You can scarcely believe your eyes when you reflect that they have been

formed in the flanks of the rock, without the aid of gunpowder, which was then unknown.

The last of these reservoirs is but half as capacious as the first ; I know not its precise dimensions, or those of the two others : I had not time to measure them. Not far off, my attention was directed to a little spring, which, I was assured, supplies all the water in those ponds. This assertion appeared to me ridiculous : without abundant rains it is not possible that they should ever be full.

Two hundred paces from Bethlehem, in another direction, is a grotto of the same kind as that of the Nativity, but not so large, dedicated to the Blessed Virgin. It is called the Grotto of Milk. Tradition relates that, before the flight into Egypt, Mary concealed herself there for some time. Here is seen an altar cut out of the rock, where mass is sometimes held, and where also the litanies are chanted.

The devotion for this place is great ; the motive for it is the virtue universally attributed to the stones of the grotto. As these stones are very soft, it is easy to chip off bits, which are reduced to powder, and in that form administered to suckling women whose milk is scanty. Not only the Greeks, the Armenians, the Russians, and in general all the nations that has pilgrims at Jerusalem, attach great confidence to this powder, but even the Turks and the Arabs, who carry it to Turkey, and into the very heart of Africa.

I shall make no remark on the virtue of these stones, and on its causes. I merely affirm, as an ascertained fact, that a great number of persons obtain from it the effect which they anticipate.

Half a league from this grotto, eastward, beyond a hill, which you descend by a very rapid declivity, is the Village of the Shepherds. This is the spot where dwelt the shepherds to whom the angels appeared for the purpose of proclaiming to them the birth of the Saviour. It may be perceived very distinctly from the terrace of the monastery, and I always contemplate it with pleasure. The history of which it reminds you is one of those which, from my earliest years, made the most agreeable im-

pression upon my memory, and I never knew a Christian child for whom it had not the same charms. At that age, much more than when the passions have introduced a proud wisdom into the soul, one finds, one feels in it something truly heavenly, and thanks to the innocence and the purity of the heart, one speedily and cheerfully ranges one's self, if I may be allowed the expression, on the side of Him, who, in admitting well-meaning men to the presence of his divine Son, has given to shepherds the precedence before kings.

This village is inhabited half by Catholics, half by Greeks. It is built like all those in these parts. Each house is a heap of stones piled up without order, and exhibiting nearly the appearance of irregular walls, in which are two holes, called, one the door, the other the window. We were shown a well, whither, according to tradition, the Virgin came to wash the clothes of the infant Jesus, while she was secreted in the Grotto of Milk.

The very spot where the shepherds heard the voices of the angels is now inclosed with walls. It is planted with fifty or sixty olive trees. The care of it is committed to a Greek priest, whom I found destitute of everything, and in a state of such abject poverty, that he had scarcely rags to cover his skin, scorched by the sun. This unfortunate creature asked me for some tobacco ; as I had none, I made amends by giving him a few pieces of money, which he received with profound gratitude. I bought of him permission to cut an olive branch thick enough to make me a walking-stick.

In the centre of the inclosure is a grotto, in which St. Helena caused a chapel to be built and dedicated to the Virgin Mary. On entering, I fell upon my knees, and, according to my custom of reading on the very spot, in that attitude, and uncovered, the passages relating to it, I read, with an extraordinary feeling of happiness, that passage of the Gospel of St. Luke, beginning with these words :

“And there were in the same country shepherds abiding in the field, keeping watch over their flock by night.”

The chapel and the inclosure of the Shepherds be-

longed formerly to the Latins; I need not tell you that they have been dispossessed of them.

As I had yesterday a long excursion before me, I mounted my horse before it was light: I intended to visit the ancient Tekoa, the birth-place of the prophet Amos; next, the Labyrinth, a name given to a series of caverns, the number of which is so considerable that it is still unknown; and lastly, the hill of the French, so called ever since the last crusade, because, after the taking of Jerusalem by the Saracens, four hundred French retired thither, and, having built a very strong castle, the ruins of which may be seen to this day, they held out there for a long time.

As usual, I had with me several monks and an escort. After a ride of two hours along a stony road, and after crossing several hills of difficult access, you arrive at Tekoa. It is now but a heap of stones, covering a space of half a league. In surveying these ruins, I perceived a pillar of red marble and a basin also of marble, surmounted by a cross. This was no doubt the baptistery of a church, which I was assured, had been built on this spot by St. Helena, though I could not discover any other vestiges of it.

On leaving Tekoa to proceed to the Labyrinth, our Bethlehemites took it into their heads to discharge their pieces, the report of which, repeated by the echoes of the hills, seemed to amuse them much. Having no more than ten armed men in my escort, I was far from approving this pastime, which would naturally apprize the Arabs of the presence of strangers in the parts bordering upon the Dead Sea. I reprimanded them, and the more severely, because, in case of attack, I had some reason not to rely too strongly on their courage. Besides, who could warrant that these shots were not a preconcerted signal? An Arab remains forever an Arab.

An hour had not elapsed, when our dragoman hurried up to us, pale and in great alarm. "There are the Bedouins!" he exclaimed; "there they are!" Presently, we actually perceived a score of dark figures following us, but yet without coming too near. I collected my people, ordered them to keep together, and, above all, to

advance slowly, to show that we were not afraid ; and, thus pursuing our route among frightful precipices, we reached the caverns. The Bedouins had retired.

The entrance to these caverns is very dangerous and almost inaccessible : you cannot approach them but over rocks, which appear as if suspended over abysses, and by-paths so narrow that a single false step might cost you your life. No recollection, sacred or profane, is attached to these frightful caverns ; and, besides, I have seen so many in the course of my travels, that I did not much care to expose myself to the risk of exploring the interior of these. However, either from shame, or a hankering of curiosity, I suffered myself to be persuaded : and there was I, acting the youngster, climbing, clambering, leaping, till at length I found myself in the first cavern.

Notwithstanding the prodigious height of the vaults, the heat here was suffocating ; the farther we advanced, the thicker the air became ; moreover, our torches were nearly burned out, and we were threatened with profound darkness. Having seen what is most remarkable I thought it prudent to give the order for our return. But when, on emerging from the vast cave, I saw at my feet those frightful precipices—when I surveyed the scarpèd rocks opposite to me, on one of which I should have to spring, I was for a moment motionless with stupor, and seriously reproached myself for my indiscretion. Fortunately, my guardian angel was at hand : assisted by a Spanish lay-brother, not less courageous than kind, I took the leap, and arrived, without accident, but not without great labour, at the place where we had left our horses.

Our caravan had increased by the way : here and there we had been joined by parties of Bethlehemites, so that we now amounted to nearly forty persons. We had taken care to provide ourselves with refreshments. Seated on the rocks, we took a light repast, that we might continue our excursion with the more vigour. Nothing could be more picturesque than the scene presented by this collation ; I would have given anything to take a sketch of it, but I had neither paper nor pencil We

were on the slope of an abyss; surrounded by rocks whose tops seemed to touch the sky. Confined within a very narrow space, we prudently held our horses by the bridle. Whenever I put a morsel of bread into my mouth, my mare neighed and pawed the ground till I had shared it with her. At the conclusion of the repast, at a moment when my thoughts were wholly engrossed by the singularity of the sight presented by the assemblage of our associates amidst the dangers that surrounded us, what was my surprise to see my dragoman bringing me some excellent coffee, in a very handsome cup. By a refinement of attention, he had prepared it so secretly that I had not perceived either fire or smoke. Coffee is here an article of the first necessity, and this I already knew from my own experience ; but could I ever have supposed that I should drink it in such a place ? The collation over, we resumed our march.

Meanwhile, the Bedouins, whom we believed to be at a great distance, had not yet been so near to us as now. They were concealed behind rocks : we perceived now and then the point of a lance, or a turban popping out and immediately drawn back again. An attack on their part appeared to me inevitable ; I dreaded it the more, since, being obliged to go one by one, leading our horses by the bridle, we had but few means of defence. They probably discovered that they should have to do not with Bethlehemites alone, but also with Europeans ; and, judging their strength inadequate, they suffered us to pass unmolested.

After a march of two hours, we arrived at the Hill of the French. The approach to this hill is extremely toilsome : no trace of a road, nothing but stones and rocks. When half-way up, my companions made me remark that, from this point, the hill was a work of art, and had been raised by the hand of man. Dr. Clarke, a celebrated English traveller, asserts that it resembles Vesuvius, and that it has a crater, which, according to his account, is distinctly visible. It is true that he saw it only from a distance. We have, nevertheless, a right to be surprised at such a mistake in a man of his merit.

From the top, the view is magnificent, enchanting.

The Dead Sea, though several leagues distant, appears to lie at your feet. Behind rise the mountains of Arabia Petræa, that vast grave of an ungrateful people ; and Nebo, which God commanded the leader of the Hebrews to ascend, and whence he showed him the whole country on either side of the Jordan, saying : “ Behold the land of Canaan, which I give unto the children of Israel for a possession . . . thou shalt see the land before thee, but thou shalt not go thither.” You know why. On the right are discerned the mountains of Hebron, where is still shown the tomb of the patriarch of Chaldea, the father of the faithful, those of Engadi, the heights of Bethulia, &c.

We got back very late, wet with a heavy shower, which overtook us by the way.

Farewell, my dear friend ; according to all appearance, my next letter will be dated from Jerusalem. I am also bidding farewell to Bethlehem ; but I hope, by the blessing of God, not for the last time.

Once more, adieu !

LETTER XXII.

Dearth—Pestilence—Jerusalem—Siege by Titus—Conversion of Constantine—Julian, the Apostate—The Caliph Omar I.—Crusades—Taking of Jerusalem—Carnage—Saladin.

Jerusalem, January 30th, 1832.

HERE I am again at Jerusalem, my dear friend, after an absence of three weeks. It was not without keen regret, and without promising myself to repeat my visit, that I left that dear Bethlehem, where I have passed such happy moments. A few days before my departure, a cruel dearth began to be felt there ; the distress became extreme, and the immense charities of the monasteries became inadequate to relieve it. I was myself overwhelmed with the applications of the Bethlehemites, who

were in want of bread, and sorely grieved at the state of their families.

Here the calamity is felt even yet more severely : it extends, as it seems, over all Palestine. In the memory of man, provisions have not been so scarce and so dear. The supplies which the pacha of Acre, who had long foreseen the siege of his capital, was obliged to collect, have singularly contributed to this famine. On the other hand, the army of Egypt, which is now blockading that fortress and inundating the country, runs away with all the rest of the produce of an unfortunately sterile year. The distress is at its height. You meet everywhere persons with pale, emaciated faces, scarcely covered with rags, who stop you at every step, holding forth to you a lean and shrivelled hand. Little children, weeping, ask their parents for bread ; and they, dying themselves of hunger, can only answer them by sighs and tears. This sad and incessant sight rends the heart, and fills it with dismay. The monastery does what it can ; it distributes as many as fifteen hundred loaves per week.

Yesterday afternoon I rode out in the direction of the monastery of Elijah. I had, in the morning, taken a rather long and very fatiguing excursion on foot : the heat was excessive. I had just peeled an orange to quench my thirst. All at once I heard cries behind me ; I stopped and looked round... Two young Arab women, one of whom had a child at her back, were warmly wrangling about the rind of the orange which I had thrown away.

Recollecting at that moment how much money I had formerly squandered in the world, in silly and useless expenses ; ah ! how guilty did I then appear in my own eyes ! My blood curdled as I thought of the immense number of distressed persons whom I might have relieved in those days of painful remembrance, when I wearied myself in the pursuit of a false felicity—when I called that happiness, which I now consider as the worst of evils ! I turned back ; I gave and I said to the poor creatures what I could to cheer them ; and, with my eyes turned towards Golgotha, I rode back to Jerusalem, smiting my bosom, more convinced than ever that true

happiness consists in imitating the charity of the Saviour, and going about upon earth doing good, like our Jesus.

I now calculate upon staying at the monastery of St. Saviour till Sunday in the Passion week, and then shutting myself up till after Easter in the church of the Holy Sepulchre. I shall continue, as I have already begun, my visits to the interior and to the environs of Jerusalem, wishing to see in the utmost detail all that is remarkable about places or monuments. Unfortunately, it is impossible for the moment to venture so far as the Jordan, the Dead Sea, the monastery of St. Saba, &c. The Arabs, pressed by the famine which afflicts the country, riot, plunder, and murder more than ever; it would be dangerous to trust one's self upon the high roads, even though taking all the precautions against them that are sufficient in ordinary times. I had an idea of starting with a trusty Arab, who was to procure me dresses similar to their's; but, the Arabs being extremely spare, the fear of being betrayed by my embonpoint caused me to relinquish my project. I could not persuade myself that the length and thickness of my beard, any more than my tanned complexion, would sufficiently disguise and screen me from danger.

Before I give you an account of my excursions, my dear friend, I think it right to note down here whatever I have been able to collect most likely to convey to you an accurate notion of Palestine, and particularly of Jerusalem. The details, on which I am about to enter, will spare you the trouble of researches which you might otherwise be tempted to make on this subject.

Palestine is a province of Asia, thus named from the Palestines or Philistines,* a powerful people, who came originally from Egypt, and occupied that part of the country extending along the Mediterranean, from Gaza on the south to Lydda on the north. In ancient times it bore the name of Canaan, the fourth son of Ham, and father of a numerous posterity. It was afterwards called the Land of Promise, because God had promised it to the

* According to the interpreters, the word *Palestines* or *Philistines* signifies *foreigners*.

patriarchs, Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob ; then the Land of Israel, and finally Judea. This last name was given to it after the return from the Babylonian captivity, because then the tribe of Judah was the only one that formed a body, which was subsequently joined by the wrecks of the other tribes, whose territories were almost entirely occupied by the Samaritans, the Idumeans, and the Philistines.

Since the coming of Jesus, it has been more commonly called the Holy Land ; on account of the ineffable miracles wrought there by God ; because the Saviour of the world was born there, lived there, died there, and there rose from the dead ; because its soil was sprinkled with his sweat, with his blood ; and because there is, one may say, not a place in it which he has not marked by the prodigies of his infinite charity.

Before the arrival of the Hebrews, this country was governed by Canaanitish kings, who exercised absolute power in their respective towns. When Joshua had conquered it, he governed it as the lieutenant of the Lord. Joshua was succeeded by the Elders, to whom the supreme authority belonged for fifteen years. After this time the Israelites fell into a sort of anarchy, which lasted seven or eight years, and were then governed by judges, for three hundred and seventeen years ; and lastly by kings, the first of whom was Saul, till the Babylonian captivity, a period of time comprehending five hundred and seven years.

On the return from captivity, Judea was subject to the kings of Persia, then to Alexander the Great, and to the kings of Syria and Egypt, his successors.

The Maccabees, after they had defended their religion by force of arms, and re-established the affairs of their nation, continued for one hundred and thirty-five years in possession of the supreme power, and lost it during the reign of Herod the Great. On the death of that prince, the Romans became absolute masters of Judea, and the kingdom which it formed was utterly destroyed.

One cannot add anything to the idea which the Scripture furnishes of this country. It is there described as the most beautiful and the most fertile in the world ; yet,

at this day, it is in general uncultivated and barren. You meet with whole plains, upon which grows nothing but a few wild plants, shooting up from amidst heaps of stones ; and bald hills, parched by the sun, where the goat can scarcely find a scanty sustenance.

Modern impiety has not failed to make the present state of these parts an argument against the veracity of the sacred book, and audaciously to insult the spirit of truth by which it was dictated. She has eyes to see, and an understanding to comprehend, the sometimes terrible effects of the blows struck by human justice. She needs no explanation how it has happened that, on the site of the palaces, the pleasure-grounds, the gardens of a great criminal, nothing is left but ruins, nothing grows but thorns and briars. She will tell you both the crime and the punishment ; you will learn of her, whose sentence condemned the culprit, whose hand overthrew those magnificent mansions, laid waste those grounds : all this she knows perfectly well ; she, who, all-powerful for a moment, and giving to her excesses the name of *justice*, carried desolation to such a length, and piled such ruins one upon another : but when the question concerns *divine justice*, she can see nothing, comprehend nothing. To her the cross is an object of derision ; the great name, before which every creature ought to bow the knee, excites her contempt. In such dispositions, wilfully blind, how should she comprehend that an accursed land, that the country of a guilty and reprobate nation, cannot now exhibit the beautiful spectacle of that delicious garden, flowing with milk and honey, which the father of the family gave to his then beloved children, because they had not yet steeped themselves in crime ? Let her come hither, like me ; let her bring with her somewhat of that love of truth, upon which people who will not any longer be Christians still pride themselves, and I venture to say that she will be obliged to do herself violence, if she does not recognise the anathema pronounced upon a land where was perpetrated the most execrable of the crimes that could fill the world with horror, upon a land where the blood of the Son of God was demanded with loud cries, and sacrilegiously spilt ; everywhere she will

perceive yet subsisting vestiges of eternal Justice, which at once awaken recollections of the sufferings of the august Victim, and of the vengeance which followed them.

Others, my dear friend, would perhaps strive to explain to you, *humanly*, how this land, formerly so fertile, is become barren, and now presents an aspect so melancholy and so dreary ; and I know not exactly what the slanderers of the holy Scriptures would have to reply to them. But how, in fact, can he who has any knowledge of history be surprised that it is thus ? What country is there in the world, where fire and sword have committed greater ravages ? What country is there in the world, where more blood has been spilled, more carnage taken place ? What country is there that has suffered more by war, by famine, and by pestilence ? ... And at this moment, when I am writing these lines, am I not myself surrounded by these calamities ? There is no doubt that, crushed by them, this country will become wholly wild and uncultivated. The springs are disappearing beneath ruins ; the soil which covered the mountains, and which was kept up by the labours of an immense population, is rolling down into the plains ; the hills, on which once grew the mulberry and the fig, now display nothing but bare and arid rocks ; the spots which received a certain degree of fertility from regular and successive supplies of mould, now exhibit only a few scattered plants of broom, and a few box-trees that have struck root in the clefts of the rocks.

And, once more, that which most contributes to render Palestine a desert is the despotic government under which it groans, and the motto of which is *destruction*. It cannot be too often repeated—the Porte daily puts up this wretched country to auction : the pacha who offers most becomes its tyrant. Master of the life of the Arab as well as of the camel, of his horse as well as of his tent, he marks his passage by exactions alone. At sight of his satellites coming to levy the tribute, the population of whole villages abandon their ruined dwellings ; and the poor oppressed inhabitants choose rather to die of want, in caverns of the rocks, than to expire under the bastinado of the soldier, who, on his part, enraged at seeing his prey

escape, revenges himself by cutting down the olive-tree of the fugitive whom he could not overtake.

But here again, my dear friend, I cannot see anything *purely human*. This despotism, this tyranny, this avarice, these vexations, heaven employs as instruments for the execution of the decrees of its inflexible justice ; and the Turk, with his crimes—the only thing that is his, and belongs to him by right—the Turk, I say, is, without knowing it, but the executioner who carries into effect the decrees of divine justice.

For the rest, it is to be observed that it is not only the sacred books which extol the primitive fertility of Palestine. If those who, in general, give so freely to pagan writers a credence and a respect which they refuse to the Scripture, had taken the pains to consult profane antiquity, they would there have found testimonies of the same truth that are above suspicion. Hecataeus, who lived in the time of the first Ptolemy, represents this country as extremely populous and abounding in all kinds of fruits. The description given of it by Pliny is not less favourable. Tacitus, Ammianus, Marcellinus, and others, in the passages where they have occasion to mention it, never speak of it but with commendation. Even at this day it seems as if Providence had determined to maintain in that desolate land visible signs of what it would be, but for the curse that rests upon it : in the cultivated parts, the wheat is remarkably beautiful, the bunches of grapes are enormous, the culinary vegetables so excellent that in no country have I eaten better, and I could say the same of many other productions of the soil.

In the things which I have to relate to you concerning Jerusalem, and especially in the long series of calamities which have befallen it ever since its hapless people dared pray to heaven that the blood of Christ might be upon them and upon their children, you will discover still more visibly and more grievously the impress of the fearful hand of God.

Jerusalem was built, according to some, in the year of the world, 2023 ; or, according to others, in 1991, by the high priest Melchisedek. He gave it the name of Salem, which signifies *abode of peace*. Fifty or sixty years after

its foundation, it was taken by the Jebusites, descendants of Jebus, son of Canaan. To insure their conquest, they enlarged the walls, and built a fortress on Mount Zion, which they called Jebus ; from the union of this name and that of Salem, according to some interpreters, the new city was called Jerusalem.

Joshua, after he had vanquished and slain Adonibesech in the battle of Gibeon, took this city. At his death the Jebusites recovered it ; but the Israelites soon made themselves masters of it again, with the exception of the fortress, which remained in the hands of their enemies, till the moment when David, finding himself in possession of the throne of Israel, went to attack them, drove them out, and chose Jerusalem for the capital of his kingdom. David enlarged it ; his son Solomon made it one of the finest cities in the East, and there built that magnificent temple, such a pompous description of which the Bible has handed down to us. After the death of that prince, and during the reign of Rehoboam, his successor, in the year of the world 3033, it fell into the hands of Sesach, king of Egypt, who contented himself with plundering the temple and the king's palace of their treasures, and retired with an immense booty, among which were shields of gold which Solomon had caused to be made. It was afterwards taken by Joash, king of Israel, during the reign of Amazia ; by the Assyrians, in the time of Manasseh ; by Nebuchadnezzar four times, in the reigns of Joachim, his son Jechoniah, and Zedekiah. The impious conqueror destroyed everything with fire and sword, razed the city to its foundations, and carried away its inhabitants into captivity.

Seventy years afterwards Jerusalem was rebuilt and peopled anew, about the year of the world 3468, (others say 3466,) by Cyrus, who permitted the Jews to return to their native country. In 3831 it fell into the power of Antiochus Epiphanes, king of Syria, who delivered it up to plunder, put to death in the space of three days upwards of eighty thousand of its inhabitants, sold forty thousand, and carried a like number into captivity : but it was retaken by Judas Maccabeus, and afterwards besieged in vain by several sovereigns of Syria. From this

period Jerusalem enjoyed tranquillity till the reign of Hircanus and Aristobulus.

In 3941, the quarrels which arose between the two brothers and their reciprocal pretensions to the exclusive royalty, as well as to the high-priesthood, furnished Pompey the Great, the conqueror of Mithridates, with a motive or a pretext for marching to Judea and laying siege to the capital. He made himself master of it, after a struggle of three months—profaned the temple by penetrating into the sanctuary, which it was lawful for the priests alone to enter—insisted on seeing all the treasures, without, however, touching any of them—expressed not only great surprise but warm admiration, on learning that the dangers of the siege, during which his machines had been almost continually directed against the temple, had not interrupted the ceremonies and the duties of the priests; he himself prescribed sacrifices to God, adjudged the high-priesthood and the government of the nation to Hircanus, divesting him only of the title of king, and returned to Rome, carrying with him, as captives, Aristobulus and his family.

Twenty-six years afterwards, Herod the Great, the prince during whose reign our Saviour was born, supported by Roman liberality, and having become sovereign of Judea, through the influence of Antony, came in his turn to attack Jerusalem, which for five months made the most obstinate resistance. The Romans, by whose aid he triumphed, perpetrated horrible profanations and cruelties. Plundering, burning, sparing neither rank, nor sex, nor age, they would have left the city a heap of ruins, if he for whom they had fought had not appeased with money the fury of the general and his soldiers.

At length arrived for that guilty Jerusalem, which, after having put to death the prophets and stoned the messengers of God, had spurned even the Messiah himself, rejected the tenderest advances of his love, and crowned all by his murder; at length, I say, arrived those disastrous days, of which the infinite charity of the Saviour had warned, while weeping over, her; those days, when, as he had told her, “thine enemies shall cast a trench about thee and compass thee round, and keep thee

in on every side, and shall lay thee even with the ground, and thy children within thee, and they shall not leave in thee one stone upon another, because thou knowest not the time of thy visitation." (Luke xix. 43, 44.)

Threatened every day in property and life by Florus, the governor of Judea, and weary of enduring his exactions and his tyranny, the Jews shook off the yoke, flew to arms, and hoisted the standard of revolt against the Romans. By command of Nero, Vespasian hastily proceeded to Palestine, with an injunction to exterminate the rebels, if he could not reduce them to obedience. To allow them time for reflection, he commenced hostilities in Galilee. It was not long before everything yielded to the swords of his soldiers, excepting Jerusalem alone, to which he laid siege. During these transactions, he was elevated to the empire, and, being obliged to return to Italy, he transferred the prosecution of the enterprise to his son Titus.

This was in the year 70, near the feast of the Passover, when an innumerable population thronged from all quarters to Jerusalem, to attend that solemnity: and this circumstance, which strengthened the confidence of the insurgents and caused them to regard themselves as invincible, is one of those which must make the divine vengeance appear the more striking and the more terrible, as well in their own eyes as in those of the whole world. That immense multitude was divided by factions; the government was in the hands of the most seditious, always more obstinate in proportion as they became more wretched, and determined to withstand to the death not only the valour and courage, but even the generosity and clemency, of the hostile general.

After long continued works, sometimes interrupted, at others partly destroyed by the hardihood of the besieged, Jerusalem had "a trench cast about her, and was compassed round, kept in on every side," and afflicted with all sorts of calamities. On the 18th of April, the first wall was carried; on the 7th of May, the second fell; on the 7th of July, Antonia's tower was taken; two days afterwards, the perpetual sacrifice ceased for ever. On the 10th of August, in spite of the most positive orders

given by Titus to save the temple, that magnificent edifice was consumed by fire. On the 7th of September the last wall was broken down, and on the following day the conqueror entered the city in triumph ; the streets, the public places, the houses, were strewed with dead and dying. Fire destroyed the quarters which the siege had spared ; the relics of the temple were demolished and the plough passed over those ruins.

I shall not repeat to you the particulars of this tremendous desolation. Heaven, to display its justice to the world, to confound the incredulity of future times and to leave it without excuse—heaven decreed that the history of that war should be written, among others, by a man whose veracity cannot be questioned ; by a man who was at once an actor in and an eye-witness of it ; who had direct and public relations with the besieged and the besiegers, with the conquerors and the conquered ; by a Jew of the sacerdotal race, at once statesman and warrior, who himself, at the head of his countrymen, fought for fifty days against Vespasian, appeared at the breach, and more than once perilled his life ; who finally, while he strikingly displayed the qualities of an Israelite, of a citizen devoted to the interests of his religion and of his country, nevertheless did such justice to the valour and generosity of the foe, that Titus deigned to sign his book with his own hand, and to deposit it in the library of Rome, as one of the fairest monuments of his glory. It is this man who, without suspecting the task which he had to perform in the plan of Providence, describes to you disasters, discords, carnage, pestilence, hastening, by command of God, to overwhelm the guilty city, to punish it for its sacrilegious iniquity.

I repeat it, my dear friend, and I cannot too earnestly entreat you to take notice, that it is a Jew—a Jew devoted to his nation, who, by his rank, his military talents, his reputation, his eloquence, by the courtesy and consideration paid him by Titus and the Roman generals, was most capable of averting such great calamities, or at least of checking their course. It is in the work of such a Jew that you may find these things recorded. Deicide Jerusalem was visited with a punishment more terrible and of

longer duration than any city in the world ever was or ever will be. In vain may impiety, in her rage against Jesus Christ, search the bloodiest pages of history ; she will find nothing that can compare with the awful picture which Josephus unfolds to your view. One thing astonishes me, my friend ; it is this : that the terrible justice inflicted by the hand of God on guilty Jerusalem does not, in our days, alarm either nations or cities, which, after her example, have dared and still dare to cry in our public places : “ We will not have this God to reign over us, neither he nor those who pretend to reign by his grace : we will have no other king than him whom we have made for ourselves, no other king than Cæsar ! ”

They had—yes, those ungrateful Jews had—their Cæsar ; and generous, clement as he wished to appear, he nevertheless permitted his soldiers to rip open the bowels of the besiegers in quest of gold ; he nevertheless commanded their city to be levelled to its foundations, their temple to be razed, and ninety-seven thousand men carried into captivity, after he had winked at the slaughter of the most infirm and aged.

Thus were those robbed, plundered, murdered, who had to Pilate’s face preferred to Jesus a robber, a murderer : and robbery, pillage, and murder, did not cease “ till the Roman army, which would never have tired of plundering and killing, no longer found objects on which to wreak its fury.” It is again the Jew, it is Josephus, who tells us this.

Thus too they were scourged by the Romans, and exposed to all sorts of indignities and torments, who had prevailed on these same Romans to deliver up Christ to them, after he had been scourged, after he had undergone the most ignominious torments and outrages. “ They were scourged, and, before death, tormented in all possible ways.” It is still the Jew, it is Josephus, who tells us so.

Thus finally were crucified in their turn those who had cried “ Crucify him ! ” and they were executed “ at the rate of fifty in a day,” but afterwards in such number, that “ scarcely could there be found hands to make the

crosses, or place to erect them." These again are the words of the Jew, of Josephus.

And the children of those from whose lips had issued the horrid blasphemy, if they did not perish, might at least be the first to see attached to the infamous gibbet—their parents, who had wished that the blood of their victim might be upon them and their children; for scarcely thirty-eight years had elapsed since the commission of the great crime.

But to proceed:—After the destruction of Jerusalem, such of the Jews as had escaped the various calamities that fell upon them, lived subject to the Roman domination till the accession of Adrian to the throne. That prince, having resolved to rebuild the walls of their city and to authorize the worship of different nations there, they at first seemed eager to contribute to the success of the undertaking; but soon, seduced by a false Messiah, named Barcochebas, they revolted, committed unheard of cruelties, and drew down upon themselves the most signal revenge recorded in history, since that inflicted by Titus. The works of the new city were considerably advanced and included Calvary in their circumference; the temple was rebuilding: it was razed, as well as fifty fortresses. Nine hundred and forty-five hamlets and villages were consigned to the flames; nearly six hundred thousand persons perished; a great number were condemned to slavery and publicly sold; Jerusalem lost its name, and was called after that of the prince *Ælia Capitolina*. The conqueror ordered a statue of Venus to be erected on Mount Calvary; that of Jupiter on the hill of the Resurrection; a marble hog over the gate leading to Bethlehem; and forbade, on pain of death, any Jew not only to enter *Ælia*, but also to approach or even to look at it from a distance. The ancient name of the city fell so speedily into oblivion, that, during the reign of Diocletian, a martyr being brought for trial before a Roman tribunal, questioned respecting his birth-place, and having answered that he was born at Jerusalem, the magistrate conceived that he was speaking of some town recently built by the Christians.

My preceding letters will have informed you, my dear

friend, what happy changes in Palestine succeeded the conversion of Constantine. The capital, which had become entirely pagan, resumed its name; that of *Ælia*, retained for some time longer by the Gentiles, at length fell into disuse. Under the protection of this prince, and by command of his illustrious mother, the idols were overthrown, Christian churches were erected, and in them the pious were at full liberty to worship the Saviour.

The Jews, disheartened by the losses and disasters which Adrian had inflicted on them, durst not make any new attempt till the year 363, when the plan projected by Julian for rebuilding the temple, with a view solemnly to give the lie to the prophecies of Jesus Christ, revived all their hopes. On the formal invitation of that prince, and in compliance with a letter addressed by him to the whole body of the nation, they thronged from all quarters; and, without distinction of sex or condition, they fell to work under the direction of Alypius the superintendent. Men, women, nay, even children, in their best apparel, worked, carried materials, dug the ground, many of them with silver spades; removed it from one place to another in hods or in the skirts of their garments, and displayed much greater activity than those pagans who were most powerfully actuated by hatred of the Christians and by the encouragements of the apostate emperor. But He, whose oracles Julian thus braved, whose might he defied, rendered all these efforts useless; He decreed that they should subserve to the more absolute fulfilment of prophecy, so that it is owing to these very labours that there is not left one stone upon another. "Awful balls of fire," says, among others, a pagan historian, "bursting from the foundations in frequent eruptions, burned the workmen and made the place inaccessible to them; and, that element continuing to repel them more and more, the enterprise was abandoned."*

In 613, Chosroës II., king of Persia, to avenge the death of his benefactor, the emperor Mauritius, assassi-

* *Metuendi globi flammæ, prope fundamenta crebris assultibus erumpentes, fecere locum, exustis aliquoties operantibus, inaccessum, hocque modo elemento obstinatus repellente, cessavit inceptum.*—AMMIAN. MARCELLIN. *lib. xxiii. c. 1.*

nated by Phocas the Usurper, penetrated into the empire and marched towards Palestine. Meanwhile Heraclius overthrew Phocas, put him to death, and begged peace of the Persian monarch. The latter replied only by taking Jerusalem, plundering or burning the churches, slaughtering the priests, selling to the Jews, for money, eighty thousand Christians, whom they caused to be put to death, and carrying away with him the treasures, the sacred utensils, and the genuine cross.

In 627, after long hostilities and frequent victories, Heraclius obliged Chosroes to betake himself to flight, and to retire to his own dominions, where he was dethroned by his eldest son, Syroes, who hastened to make peace, and gave up the true cross; the solemn restitution of which, to the Holy City, furnished occasion both to Greeks and Latins for a yearly festival held on the 14th of September, by the name of Exaltation of the Holy Cross.

Nine years afterwards, the caliph, Omar I., second successor of Mahomet, one of the most terrible conquerors that have ravaged the world, successively subdued Armenia, Mesopotamia, Egypt, Phœnicia, Syria, and Palestine; took Jerusalem, after a siege of four months, and brought the whole country under the Mussulman dominion. In 643 he was assassinated by a Persian slave, who stabbed him with a knife, and he died of the wound in three days.

From this period till the end of the 11th century, Palestine, under the Mahometan domination, languished in oppression, a prey to poverty, anarchy, and all sorts of vexations. The erection of several caliphats in Syria and Arabia, the frequent contests of the different dynasties with one another, their alternate defeats and triumphs, perpetuated troubles and disorder. Jerusalem changed masters without changing its condition; the persecutions of the Christians who dwelt in that city, and of those who repaired thither from all parts on pilgrimage, became more frequent and more violent under the Fatimite caliphs. The East was no longer sufficient for the fury of the Crescent; the West found itself threatened with an inundation of barbarians. Europe roused herself to pre-

vent the calamity : she assumed the cross, and went forth to succour her children and to rescue the tomb of Christ.

Under the command of Godfrey of Bouillon, duke of Lower Lorraine, who was followed by his brother Eustace and Baldwin, accompanied by gentlemen of the most illustrious families, the crusaders set out early in the spring of the year 1096. A man of low stature, with an ordinary countenance, nay, mean-looking, according to some, dressed in a woollen tunic, half covered by a short elcloak, disguising under this coarse exterior lofty thoughts and a great heart, marched at their head, barefoot and with the pilgrim's staff in his hand : this was Peter the Hermit. In vain did the Greeks strive to stop them : in spite of their efforts, they penetrated into the East.

After successes, chequered by many and cruel reverses, they made themselves masters of Nicæa, several towns of Natolia, Antioch, &c. In 1099, they found themselves beneath the walls of the capital of Judea. Rama and Emmaus surrendered to Godfrey ; while, in another direction, his nephew Baldwin du Bourg, seconded by Tancred, took Bethlehem. The sight of the Holy City ; the statements and supplications of the Christians, who, expelled by the Mussulmans, repaired to the camp of the crusaders to implore their succour ; the gratifying thought that a few more efforts would deliver the heritage of Jesus Christ, and gloriously crown all their toils—all concurred to inflame their enthusiasm and to rekindle their zeal. They vowed anew to rescue Jerusalem from the yoke of the infidel or to die martyrs. The preparations for the siege were urged forward with activity ; they braved privations, dangers, the intolerable heat of the weather, hunger, and parching thirst. All things were soon in readiness—machines, ladders, revolving towers ; the whole army confessed its sins and received the holy communion. Soldiers and chiefs flew with equal ardour to the fight. The first attack, which took place on Thursday, the 14th of July, was interrupted only by the darkness of the night, and renewed next morning with fresh vigour. On Friday, at noon, the victory was still uncertain ; at three o'clock, the very hour at which the Saviour of the world expired, it was won by the Christians,

and their standard floated on the ramparts of Jerusalem, proclaiming to a distance the signal defeat of their enemies.

"Incensed by the threats and the long insults of the Saracens," says the most celebrated and at the same time the most impartial historian of the Crusades, "exasperated by the hardships which they had suffered during the siege, and by the resistance which they had met with in the city, the crusaders filled with blood and mourning that Jerusalem which they came to deliver, and which they considered as their future home.

"Presently," he continues, "the carnage became general. Those who escaped the swords of the soldiers of Godfrey and Tancred, encountered the Provençals, equally athirst for their blood. The Saracens were slaughtered in the streets, in the houses; Jerusalem contained no asylum for the vanquished. Some found means to escape death by throwing themselves from the ramparts; others fled in throngs to seek refuge in the palaces, in the towers, and especially in their mosques, where they could not secrete themselves from the pursuit of the Christians.

"The crusaders, having stormed the mosque of Omar, where the Saracens had for some time defended themselves, renewed there the deplorable scenes which had sullied the conquest of Titus. The foot soldiers and the horsemen rushed in pell-mell along with the vanquished. Amid the most tremendous uproar, nought was to be heard but the shrieks and groans of death: the victors trampled upon heaps of dead in pursuit of those who sought in vain to flee. Raymond d'Agiles, an eye-witness, says that, under the porch and in the court of the mosque, the blood was so deep as to reach up to the knees and the bridles of the horses To describe this awful spectacle which war has twice exhibited on the same spot, it will suffice to observe, in the words of Josephus, the historian, that the number of the victims sacrificed by the sword far surpassed that of the conquerors who thronged from all quarters to participate in the slaughter; and that the mountains contiguous to the Jordan repeated groaning the frightful din that was heard in the temple.

"The mind turns with horror from these scenes of

desolation, and can scarcely pause, amid the carnage, over the touching picture of the Christians of Jerusalem, whose chains the crusaders came to break. No sooner was the city taken, than they came forth to meet the conquerors. They shared with them the provisions which they concealed from the search of the Saracens ; and all of them returned thanks together to God who had granted victory to the soldiers of the cross.

“ Peter the Hermit, who, five years before, had promised to arm the West for the deliverance of the Christians of Jerusalem, must have witnessed with delight their gratitude and their joy. The believers of the Holy City, mingled among the crowd of the crusaders, seemed to seek, to see, only that generous cenobite, who had visited them in their afflictions, and all whose promises had just been fulfilled. They thronged around the venerable hermit : it was to him that they addressed their hymns ; it was he whom they proclaimed their deliverer ; they related to him the miseries which they had suffered during his absence ; they could scarcely believe what was passing before their eyes, and, in their enthusiasm, they were astonished that God should have made use of a single man to rouse so many nations and to work such wonders.

“ At the sight of their brethren whom they had delivered, the pilgrims no doubt recollected that they had come to worship at the tomb of Christ. The pious Godfrey, who had abstained from carnage after the victory, left his companions, and followed by three attendants, went without arms and barefoot into the church of the Holy Sepulchre. The tidings of this act of devotion soon spread throughout the Christian army ; all fury, all animosities, immediately subsided ; the crusaders stripped off their blood-stained garments, and headed by the clergy, walked together barefoot and bareheaded to the church of the Resurrection.

“ When the Christian army was thus assembled on Calvary, night began to fall. Silence reigned in the public places and around the ramparts ; nought was heard in the Holy City save penitential hymns and these words of Isaiah : ‘ Ye who love Jerusalem, rejoice with her.’ The

crusaders then manifested a devotion so warm and so tender, that, according to the remark of a modern historian, you would have said that these men, who had just taken a city by storm and made a horrid carnage, were but then come from a long seclusion and a profound meditation of our mysteries. These unaccountable contrasts are frequently to be observed in the history of the Crusades. Some writers have made them a pretext for accusing the Christian religion; others, not less blind and not less prejudiced, have endeavoured to excuse the deplorable excesses of fanaticism: impartial history merely records them, and deplores in silence the frailties of human nature.

“The pious fervour of the Christians only suspended the scenes of slaughter. Policy might persuade some of the chiefs that it was necessary to strike great terror into the Saracens; they might think too that, if they set at liberty those who had defended Jerusalem, they should have to fight them again; and that they could not, in a distant country, keep without danger prisoners whose number exceeded that of their own soldiers. The approach of the Egyptian army was moreover announced, and the dread of a new danger closed their hearts against pity. In their council, sentence of death was pronounced upon all the Mussulmans who were left in the city.

“Fanaticism seconded but too cheerfully this barbarous policy. All the enemies whom humanity or weariness of slaughter had at first spared, and all those who had been saved in the hope of a rich ransom, were put to death. The Saracens were forced to fling themselves from the tops of towers and of houses; they were burned alive; they were dragged from the recesses of cellars into the public places, where they were sacrificed upon piles of carcases. Neither the tears of the women, nor the cries of the young children, nor the sight of the spot where Jesus forgave his tormentors—nothing, in short, could soothe the exasperated conquerors. So great was the carnage that, according to Albert of Aix, heaps of dead were to be seen not only in the palaces, in the temples, in the streets, but also in the most retired and solitary places. Such was the fury of vengeance and fanaticism, that not

an eye was shocked by these scenes. The contemporary historians relate without seeking to excuse them; and in their narratives, full of revolting details, they never betray any feeling of horror or pity.

“Such of the crusaders whose hearts were not closed against generous sentiments, could not bridle the fury of an army, which, hurried away by the passions of war, deemed that it was avenging the wrongs of religion. Three hundred Saracens, who had sought refuge on the platform of the mosque of Omar, were slaughtered there on the day of the conquest, in spite of the intreaties of Tancred, who had sent them his banner for a safeguard, and was indignant at this violation of the laws of honour and chivalry. The Saracens who retired to the fortress of David were almost the only individuals exempted from the slaughter. Raymond accepted their capitulation: he had the good fortune and the glory to enforce its execution; and to most of the crusaders this act of humanity appeared so strange, that they were less disposed to praise the generosity of the Count de St. Gilles, than to find fault with his avarice.

“It was a week before the butchery ceased. Those Saracens who, during this interval, had contrived to evade the pursuit of the Christians, were reserved for the service of the army. The eastern historians, agreeing with the Latins, estimate the number of the Mussulmans slain in Jerusalem at more than seventy thousand. The Jews were no more spared than the Saracens: the synagogue, in which they had taken refuge, was set on fire, and all perished in the flames.

“Meanwhile the heaps of dead bodies in the public places, the blood spilt in the streets and in the mosques, were liable to generate pestilential diseases. The chiefs issued orders for cleansing the city and for removing a sight which, no doubt, became odious to them, in proportion as fury and vengeance subsided in the hearts of the Christian soldiers. The Mussulman prisoners, who had escaped the sword of the conqueror merely to endure the horrors of slavery, were employed in burying the mangled bodies of their friends and brethren. They wept, says Robert the Monk, and they carried the bodies out of

Jerusalem. In this painful occupation they were assisted by the soldiers of Raymond, who, being the last that entered the city, and having had but little share of the booty, sought to pick up something among the dead.

“The city of Jerusalem soon presented a new aspect. In the space of a few days it had changed inhabitants, laws, and religion. Before the last assault it had been agreed, according to the custom of the crusaders in their conquests, that every warrior should remain master and owner of the house or edifice which he should be the first to enter. A cross, a shield, or any other token affixed to the door, was the title of possession for each of the conquerors. This right of property was respected by the soldiers eager after plunder; and all at once the utmost order prevailed in a city which had been so recently consigned to all the horrors of war. Part of the treasures taken from the infidels was employed in relieving the poor and the orphans, and in decorating the altars of Christ that were re-erected in the Holy City. The lamps, the candelabra of gold and silver, and the rich ornaments in the mosque of Omar, fell to the share of Tancred. A chronicle of the time relates that these valuable trophies were sufficient to fill six wagons, and that it took two days to clear and carry them away from the mosque. Tancred divided this rich booty with the duke of Bouillon, whom he had adopted for his liege lord.

“But the crusaders soon turned their eyes from the treasures promised to their valour, in order to admire a more precious conquest; this was the true cross, carried off by Chosroes, and brought back to Jerusalem by Heraclius. The Christians shut up in the city had secreted it from the Mussulmans during the siege. The sight of it produced the most vehement transports among the pilgrims. ‘At which thing,’ says an old chronicler, ‘the Christians were as full of joy as if they had seen the body of Jesus Christ hanging thereupon.’ It was carried in triumph through the streets of Jerusalem, and then replaced in the church of the Resurrection.

“Ten days after their victory, the crusaders began to think of re-establishing the throne of David and Solomon, and of seating upon it a chief capable of preserving and

maintaining a conquest won by the Christians at the expense of so much blood. Prayers, fasts, and alms were enjoined that heaven might deign to preside over the election which was about to take place. Those who were appointed to choose the king of Jerusalem swore, in the presence of the Christian army, unbiassed by private interest, favour, or affection, to award the crown to wisdom and virtue. These electors, whose names history has not handed down to us, took the greatest pains to study the opinion of the army respecting each of its chiefs. William of Tyre relates that they went so far as to question the attendants and servants of all those who had pretensions to the crown of Jerusalem, and that they made them take an oath to reveal all that they knew concerning the manners, character, and most secret propensities of their masters. The servants of Godfrey of Bouillon bore the most striking testimony to his domestic virtues; and, in their ingenuous sincerity, they found but one fault with him, that of ‘contemplating with an idle curiosity the images and the pictures in the churches, and stopping before them so long, even after divine service was over, that very often he outstayed his meal-times, and the dishes prepared for his table got cold and lost their flavour.’

“At length the electors, after making all the necessary inquiries and maturely deliberating, proclaimed the name of Godfrey. This choice produced the greatest joy in the Christian army, which thanked heaven for giving it as a sovereign and chief him who had so often led it on to victory.”

After the interesting particulars with which the impartial account that you have just read concludes, it is superfluous for me to tell you that the new king displayed on the throne the qualities of an accomplished and truly Christian sovereign. Unfortunately, he survived his elevation but one year and three days. On the 18th of July, 1100, the Christians had to lament the loss of this excellent prince, who died regretted by all.

Baldwin, his brother and successor, was crowned on Christmas-day in the following year, and reigned eighteen years with glory. Death overtook him amidst his conquests, on the frontiers of Egypt. The royal dignity

devolved to his nephew, Baldwin II., who governed three years.

In consequence of his marriage with Melisandra, eldest daughter of Baldwin II., Foulques, count of Anjou, became fourth king of Jerusalem. He died, ten years afterwards, from the effects of a fall from his horse. His son, Baldwin III., inherited the crown, wore it twenty years, and died of poison. During his reign, St. Bernard preached in the West a second crusade, at the head of which appear Louis VII. and the emperor Conrad.

Amauri I., brother of Baldwin III.—Baldwin IV., son of Amauri,—Baldwin V., nephew of Baldwin IV., successively filled the throne. The first two marked their reign by no action of importance; that of the third was but momentary: he was a child whom disease carried off at the age of eight years. His mother Sybilla, by endeavouring to obtain the crown for her second husband, Guy de Lusignan, gave rise to divisions among the Christians which had the most disastrous results. Factions, eager after authority, were formed: the grandees violently disputed among themselves the right to govern the state, harassed, persecuted one another, and accelerated the downfall of the Holy City.

About this time, Adad, caliph of the Fatimites in Egypt, having chanced to die—Saladin, his visir and general of his armies, caused himself to be proclaimed soldan. Having already won numerous and rapid triumphs, he was marching towards Jerusalem, not suspecting that treachery would facilitate his conquest of the city. On arriving before Tiberias, he gave battle to the Christians, put them to the rout, took prisoner their king Lusignan, who was basely betrayed by Raimond, count of Tripoli; found himself, after a series of successes, before the capital; laid siege to it, and forced it to capitulate on the 20th of October, 1197. His soldiers, in the intoxication of victory, flew to the temple, pulled down the gold cross which adorned its summit, dragged it ignominiously through the streets, and broke it in pieces upon Mount Sion. The churches were forced open and plundered, with the single exception of that

of the Holy Sepulchre, which the *generosity* of the conqueror granted in consideration of a sum of money to the Christians of the East, with permission to pilgrims of other nations to visit it, on condition that they should go thither without arms, and pay certain duties, the amount of which he reserved the right of fixing. All the Christians were declared slaves, without any other mitigation of their lot than the right to ransom themselves at the rate of ten gold besants each. Unable to pay so high a ransom, fourteen thousand of them were carried into slavery.

Six years afterwards, Saladin fell ill at Damascus, and, like Alexander, he knew that he should die. Aware of the nullity of human greatness, he caused the coffin in which he was to be buried to be carried through the city, and the herald who bore this standard of death was ordered to cry : “ Here is all that Saladin, the conqueror of the East, carries with him of his conquests ! ”—words which, without any alteration but that of the names, might serve as a general epitaph for all conquerors of the earth, for all the mighty of a day, who make it tremble but for a moment, and who devour in haste its inhabitants and their treasures, only to be swallowed up by it themselves the next moment, with nothing about them but a paltry winding-sheet.

Allow me to make one reflexion by the way, my dear friend. Have not your eyes and mine beheld those giants of power, to whom a truly pagan adulation has dared to ascribe more than to heaven itself the empire and government of the world, and all whose majesty has already been devoured by worms at the bottom of a sepulchre? And might not these new omnipotents, in whose presence princes and people lately bowed the knee, say of themselves even with greater reason than Saladin :—

State after state I’ve added to my realm ;
 “ I’ve thrown down twenty kings : and to the tomb
 Of all these conquests nought I take with me
 Save this one rag ! ”

In 1228, Frederic II., emperor of Germany, who, at the time of his coronation had solemnly sworn to go and

fight the infidels, being urged by the pope to fulfil his promise, set out with a numerous army and arrived at Tyre in the month of September. The sultan Meleddin, being alarmed, averted the storm by a treaty, agreeably to which he restored to the Christians all their prisoners, and put them in possession of Jerusalem, Bethlehem, Nazareth, and Sidon. Frederic entered the city triumphantly, went to the church of the Holy Sepulchre, placed upon his head Godfrey's crown, which he took from the altar, and which no one thought of offering to him, and shortly afterwards returned to Europe.

Meanwhile the empty title of king of Jerusalem continued to pass from one prince to another, and at every change the pretensions of the rival factions became a source of calamities and disorders not less disastrous than before.

In 1242, the treaty concluded by Meleddin with Frederic, and which was limited to ten years, having expired, the sovereigns of Egypt, taking advantage of the internal troubles, had again made themselves masters of the Holy Land.

About this period, the emir of Damascus, being at war with the sultan, took Jerusalem from him, and was not afraid to incense him by restoring it to the Christians. Vengeance speedily followed. An army of Karismians hastened to the capital, retook it, plundered it, slaughtered the inhabitants, and delivered it in this deplorable state to the successor of the vanquished prince, who had died in the interval.

In 1248, St. Louis, with the intention of fulfilling a vow which he had made to go to the assistance of the Christians of the Holy Land, embarked at Aigues-Mortes, accompanied by almost all the chivalry of France. But heaven decreed that he should appear in the East only to show the infidels that a Christian king is much greater in illness and captivity than in the field of battle. A prisoner to the last heir of Saladin, he saw that prince cut off by the hands of assassins; and the murderers themselves paid such profound homage to his royal virtues as to deem them worthy of the throne of Egypt. He excited in them equal astonishment and admiration by his patience

and the intrepidity with which he rejected every proposition that was beneath him. "We considered thee," said they, "as our captive, our slave; and it is thou who treatest us as if we were thy prisoners."

From this period, Mameluke chiefs successively ascended the throne of Egypt and oppressed Palestine by their tyranny. In the space of forty-three years, the Christians lost the very last place which they possessed in that country; they were entirely expelled from it in 1291, and an end was put to the second kingdom of Jerusalem, after a duration of eighty-eight years.

The only vestiges of those crusaders whose glorious achievements saved the West from barbarism, and whom anti-christian philosophy calumniates with greater violence and animosity than the Mussulman himself, are to be found in the different orders of religious chivalry which we have seen subsisting till our times. These orders have defended, protected Europe, as their family; and Europe has destroyed or suffered them to expire, weakly sacrificing them to the irreligion of the age; and perhaps also prompted by that allurements of gold, which at the present day torments her not less than the Turk, the Arab, and the Bedouin.

The Baharite sultans, having no reason to dread the efforts of the West, and delivered from the Christians of Palestine by the triumphs of Melek-Araf, maintained possession of their conquests from 1291 till 1382. About this time they were overthrown by the Mamelukes of Circassia, who successively placed one of their own body on the throne, and ruled till 1517. Tourmon Bey, the last of those whom they had elevated to the supreme power, having been defeated in two battles by the ferocious Selim I., emperor of the Turks, lost his life in an ignominious manner; he was hanged on one of the gates of Grand Cairo, by command of the conqueror, who became master of all his dominions. Palestine has ever since belonged to the Ottoman emperors, who include in their titles that of "lord and servant of Jerusalem."

I know not, my friend, what effect is produced in your mind by this frightful series of calamities which for so many ages have befallen Jerusalem, and a very faint

image of which my pen has rapidly, and as it were running, here set before you ; but, if your soul feels all that they make mine feel, I can affirm that they leave you an impression which no language can describe. Eighteen times taken, seventeen times sacked and laid in ruins ; after undergoing during the war all the distresses, all the horrors, which attend that scourge ; after losing millions of men by famine, by pestilence, by the sword, by fire ; maltreated, plundered, sometimes even laid waste during the short intervals of peace ; never resting but beneath the sword which her tyrants hold continually suspended over her head ; breathing somewhat more freely, if I may be allowed the expression, only for the time necessary to furnish fresh generations for fresh calamities ; unable to call together the wretched remnant of the innumerable population which formerly she collected annually within her walls, without hosts of enemies instantly rushing upon her to disperse, to crush, and to destroy ; scarcely retaining, out of all the buildings that constituted her ancient glory, more than a few ruins of their first ruins ; feeling torrents of fire boiling in her bowels, ready to burst forth and to consume any one who shall be tempted to endeavour to restore her altars and her splendour, who with this intention shall attempt to replace one stone upon another ; doomed to see both in and around her no other temples than those to which Christian piety repairs to worship the God whom she crucified, and those mosques consecrated to the absurd as well as sacrilegious superstitions of Mahomet, the chief and the pattern of the rulers under whose sabre she groans — does she not exhibit to the world a spectacle of wretchedness, degradation, and desolation, such as the history of no other city in the world presents ? Does she not say to every one who like me comes to look closely at her : “ I am accursed ? ” And should one imagine that a single human mouth could call all this *fatality, chance*, if a stupid impiety had not so called it ?

I know, my friend, that this language of impiety has reached your ears, and that it has excited in you profound indignation ; but you should come hither to see how very pitiful it is. Be no longer surprised that certain men pretend to attribute to chance that which to us Christians the

history of religion explains in so precise, so clear a manner, by showing us, on the one hand, crime ; on the other, punishment. The men who talk thus are the same who give to *chance* the honour of the existence and of the course of the sun, rather than admit that a supreme intelligence has launched into space and imparted to it that regularity of motion from which it never deviates. They are sufficiently good logicians to feel that there is danger for them in even admitting that the eye is made to see, the ear to hear, and they will not compromise themselves. *Chance* is a God which does not annoy consciences ; he does not punish bad actions.

For my part, my dear friend, when I consider only with the eyes of my reason the long chain of facts and the consequences which they involve, I feel that I must do violence to my understanding to prevent it from arriving at belief. But when I open our sacred books, when I read them *here* on the very theatre of the divine vengeance—oh, how much more clear, more distinct, more luminous, then appears the impress of the hand of God upon Jerusalem ! I see it bearing more and more heavily from age to age on the guilty city, because it punishes in her the most heinous of all crimes, and at the same time that there may not pass from the earth a single generation, which, unless it wilfully turns away its eyes, shall not perceive the punishment and derive instruction from it, or remain inexcusable.

The Lord, I am told in the holy Scriptures, chose and sanctified this place, that his name might be there for ever : and his eyes and his heart were to be there perpetually, (II. Chron., c. vii., v. 16,) if Jerusalem herself remained faithful, and the penalty of her infidelity had been signified to her beforehand. Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel, Amos, had warned her of all the calamities that befel her before the coming of our Saviour.

Daniel wrote more than six hundred years before Titus appeared, and I read in Daniel the same predictions that my Saviour *here* uttered, weeping, thirty-eight years before Titus came to fulfil them.

“ Messiah shall be cut off, but not for himself : and the people of the prince that shall come shall destroy the city

and the sanctuary ; he shall make it desolate even until the consummation." (Daniel ix. 26, 27.)

Were I to strive to raise doubts respecting the precise date of these prophecies, could I help avowing to myself that they were written, known, translated, circulated, among the nations long before the events by which they were accomplished ?

And suppose, my friend, it could so happen at this day that the obstinacy of some men, too many of whom, alas ! I knew before I renounced the world, were to insist, contrary to all evidence, that these prophecies, these oracles, were written after the events occurred, do you think it would be necessary for me to enter into an historical discussion for the purpose of refuting them ? I should merely take up Daniel again, and continue to read the destinies of Jerusalem.

"The abomination of desolation shall be in the temple, and the desolation shall continue even unto the consummation and the end."*

It would be curious if any one were to maintain, that Daniel is not yet dead, and that these words were written but yesterday . . . I do not think so. And I am at Jerusalem ; and I see but too plainly, that the desolation still continues.

O, my dear friend ! what a comfort it is to believe in Jesus Christ our Saviour ! and what violence we are forced to do to reason and common sense, if we would withdraw ourselves from his holy law !

Adieu !

* This passage does not correspond with our received English version, though a correct translation of the Latin Vulgate quoted by the author : "Et erit in templo abominatio desolationis, et usque ad consummationem et finem perseverabit desolatio." (Daniel, ix. 27.)—TRANSLATOR.

LETTER XXIII.

Way of the Captivity—Road of the Cross.

Jerusalem, February 9th, 1832.

I do not believe, my friend, that, among the men whom the interest of the passions, and pride in particular, has most violently inflamed against Christianity, there is one who has carried his perverseness so far as to deny the existence of Jerusalem. Not but that, in reading the travels of some of those scientific men, who, from such disgraceful motives have turned their science against God, you perceive, on their arrival in the East, that the sight of Palestine is unpleasant to them, and that they would rather have found no traces of it. Unfortunately for their perverse desires, it is not possible to raise, on this point, the slightest doubt capable of misleading minds ever so disposed to suffer themselves to be seduced. The name of the capital of Judea is connected, as it were, from its very origin, with the history of contemporaneous nations. Advancing through the intermediate ages to the time of Jesus Christ, it is found so frequently repeated in books and in monuments, that, to get rid of it, you must tear out the most remarkable pages, not only of the Jewish but also of the pagan historians: and again, those annals, thus mutilated, would proclaim, by the chasms which they would present, what mutilations they had suffered from hands inimical to truth.

It would not be less difficult to dispute, with any show of reason, in its essential points, the situation of ancient Jerusalem, of its stream, of its fountains, of its walls, of its quarters, of its temple, of its principal buildings, &c. Had we but the description left us by the Jew, to whom I referred in my last letter, that alone would be sufficient to justify the greater part of Christian traditions, relative to places. The plan of the Holy City transmitted to us by Josephus is so detailed, so precise, that, after the eighteen hundred years which have passed over these ruins, the genius of architecture would be capable of setting it again, in a manner, before our eyes, if the curse of

divine justice did not oppose an invincible obstacle to the attempt.

On the other hand, the public personages, the legislators, the kings, the princes, the great men, those who exercised any power, religious or civil, who, by the importance of the part which they acted on the stage of the world, have acquired any celebrity—who, by splendid actions, by virtues, or by crimes, have influenced the destinies of nations—all these personages are so closely connected with the places, that the names of both, according to the periods, are met with together as though they were indissolubly united. How then is it possible, with any appearance of reason, to deny the authority of history? The first temple of Jerusalem will ever remind you of Solomon and his glory; Calvary will ever repeat the sufferings and death of Jesus, much more strongly than Rome and Athens, in their origin, will call up recollections of Romulus and Cecrops.

To these considerations, my dear friend, add the continuity and character of the evidence. At Jerusalem, before it was destroyed, there were Christians, and in great number. Among these numerous Christians, several had become so on seeing the miracles which the life of Christ is full of; they had frequently been among his followers, both in Jerusalem, and even in the mountains and the hamlets of Judea: some had been particular objects of his beneficence. Others, eye-witnesses, too, of the same transactions, had been converted after the resurrection, or later, by the early preaching of the Apostles: all of them, full of confidence in the words of their divine Master, and expecting no other happiness but that which his doctrine promised them, habitually fed their hopes with the recital or the remembrance of the wonders which had accompanied his birth, his life, his sufferings, his death, his glorious resurrection from the grave; all of them were accurately acquainted with the places where such great things were accomplished: they conversed about them, visited them, made it a duty of religion to point them out to the piety of the new believers, who were daily joining the infant Church; and it may be affirmed that their faith, their knowledge, their love, had not only followed and

watched, but, in some sort, marked every step of the Saviour's. Have the war with the Romans, the desolation of the city, the destruction of its walls and its temple ; in short, all that at this day a lying incredulity opposes to the truth of the traditions, been able to change, to distort the positions, to displace the hills, the stream, to cause the respective situation of places so often traversed, visited, honoured with such reverence, to be forgotten ? Of all that impiety has made such a noise about, it is the buildings alone that have mostly disappeared ; and what thence results for the traditions ? why this—that the fathers of those days, when it was impossible for them to point out to their children those edifices *standing*, used, in describing them and indicating their sites, a language, alas ! too much like that which, amidst the desolations of our days, other fathers, our contemporaries, have been obliged to address to their sons :

“ Under that heap of stones is the site of Herod's palace ”—“ Beneath the ruins of those walls was the Lithostrotos, where Jesus was condemned to death ”—“ Under those fragments of pilasters our Saviour met his mother ”—“ Near those shattered arcades the Son of God spoke to the holy women ”—“ That pillar, which stands alone amidst so many destructions, was on one side of the door of the Judgment hall, and to it was affixed the sentence pronounced by Pilate,” &c., &c.

And whatever there was sad or painful in the contemplation of the ruins served to engrave the facts more deeply upon the mind, by more powerfully affecting the heart.

But the means to which I have been referring, my dear friend, and by the aid of which, in general, facts are preserved for ages, and transmitted from generation to generation, seem on this occasion not to have been sufficient for the wisdom of Providence. In the divine economy of its designs, it decreed that the greatest enemies of the cross should be the very persons who should point out to the Christians the various theatres of the ignominy, the insults, the sufferings, of the Son of God, and that of his death. Assuredly, nothing was farther from the thoughts of the pagan emperors than the inten-

tion to undertake such a task. When, however, absolute masters of Jerusalem, out of hatred to the new religion, and with the sole aim of strangling it in its cradle, they selected in preference the places which it recommends most to the reverence of its children, for the purpose of erecting on them temples, altars, statues, to the deities of Rome ; what did they but proclaim that, on the very spots where paganism dared set up its vain idols, its Jupiter, its Adonis, its Venus, were accomplished the most awful mysteries of redemption and salvation ? And since the Crescent has in its turn ruled over hapless Jerusalem, what else is again done by the avarice of the pachas, in selling at a high price the access to those same places, the approach to which was formerly prohibited by the impurity of an idolatrous worship or by menaces of death, without, however, being able to cause them to be forgotten ? There is nothing, not excepting the very filth with which the Turkish populace takes a hideous delight to pollute certain spots, certain buildings, certain ruins, but serves to keep up the traditions, and contributes to point out to the pilgrims who throng from all parts of the world to the Holy Land the points to which Christian piety is most powerfully attracted, where the heart is filled with sentiments of love and gratitude, more intense, more ardent, more generous, more tender, more worthy of Jesus Christ.

It was to precisely this theatre of the passion of my Saviour that, on my return from Bethlehem, my first thoughts were directed. I have spent several days in examining it, not, as on my first arrival at Jerusalem, in haste and confining myself to the principal points, but taking them all in regular succession, and in the order of the events marked in the evangelical history, beginning with the Way of the Captivity, which comprehends the whole space traversed by Jesus Christ, from the moment of his apprehension till that when Pilate, too weak to use his authority in behalf of innocence, in the hope of softening the multitude and disarming its fury, showed to it him for whose blood it was clamouring, clad in robes of mock royalty, and covered with wounds, saying : " Behold the man ! "

Accompanied by Jacob, my dragoman, who speaks

Turkish and Arabic fluently, I sallied forth by St. Stephen's gate. We descended the hill on which that martyr was stoned, and, having crossed the bridge over the brook Cedron, we found ourselves at the first station, at Gethsemane, in that sacred garden which Jesus bedewed with his sweat and his blood, where he was taken and bound, to be thence dragged to Jerusalem. The painful thoughts which had assailed me on my first visit again rent my soul. The spot where the Saviour was betrayed by the kiss of the infamous Judas, that where the august Victim presented him to the soldiers who came to seize him, excited in me all the indignation that I had felt the first time ; it seemed as though I were present at the scene of horror described by St. John :

“ And Judas also which betrayed him knew the place, for Jesus oft-times resorted thither with his disciples.

“ Judas, then, having received a band of men and officers from the chief priests and Pharisees, cometh thither with lanterns, and torches, and weapons.

“ Jesus, therefore, knowing all things that should come upon him, went forth and said unto them : Whom seek ye ?

“ They answered him : Jesus of Nazareth. Jesus saith unto them : I am he. And Judas also which betrayed him stood with him.

“ As soon then as he had said to them : I am he, they went backward and fell to the ground.

“ Then asked he them again : Whom seek ye ? and they said : Jesus of Nazareth.

“ Jesus answered : I have told you that I am he. If therefore ye seek me, let these go their way.

“ That the saying might be fulfilled which he spake : Of them which thou gavest me have I lost none.” (John xviii. 2—9.)

Methought I saw—I did see, those soldiers, that multitude, those torches, those staves, and those swords : I heard the questions repeated by the Saviour, who knew all things, and the answers of those furious men : I witnessed the terrible effect of those words : “ I am he ”—words so simple, so modest, so mild, and which nevertheless proved, to those to whom they were addressed, a

thunder-bolt that made them start back and fall to the ground : and, in the transports of ardent gratitude, I admired that divine goodness, which, accepting for itself all sorts of insults, ill treatment, and sufferings, was anxious only to preserve the disciples from them, that he might not lose any of those whom his Father had given him, any of those who were his.

It was near the grotto of the Agony that Jesus, giving himself up voluntarily and freely to death by these words : "I am he whom ye seek," held forth his divine hands to the soldiers who bound them. Having proceeded for some time along the bank of the Cedron, they crossed the brook. A tradition relates that our Lord, being violently pushed by them, fell at the foot of the bridge, where is still to be seen the print of two knees on a rock, which is held in great veneration. The ground contiguous to it has been purchased by the Armenians.

The soldiers then forced Jesus to ascend Mount Sion, and proceeded towards the house of Annas, an aged priest, and father-in-law of Caiaphas, the high-priest for that year, the same who had declared to the Jews that it was *expedient* that one man should die for the people.

This house of Annas the chief-priest, or, to speak more correctly, the church erected on its ruins, forms the second station. Here is now seen a convent of Armenians ; it stands near David's gate, almost at the foot of Mount Sion. In the church, on the left, is pointed out the place into which Jesus was put, before he was taken to the high-priest.

Close to this is the site of the hall where Jesus, having been ushered into the presence of the aged priest, impatient to feast himself on the sight of his humiliations, was questioned by him concerning his doctrine and his disciples, and struck by one of the officers of the palace for having answered frankly and truly :

"I spake openly to the world ; I ever taught in the synagogue and in the temple, whither the Jews always resort, and in secret have I said nothing. Why askest thou me ? ask them which heard me ; they know what I said."

From the house of Annas, Jesus was conducted to the palace of Caiaphas, where is the third station.

It was in this palace that Caiaphas called together at night the priests, the doctors of the law, the senators, the scribes and the Pharisees, before whom he caused Jesus to be brought. It was there that, in the name of the living God, the divine Saviour was adjured by the high priest to say if he was the Christ, the Son of God, and that, when he answered, "I am he," he was declared a blasphemer ; and, as such, deserving of death.

The site of the palace of Caiaphas is on Mount Sion, beyond the present walls of Jerusalem. The Greeks have built a monastery upon it. Some travellers make mention of the hall in which our Lord was questioned, and exposed to insults and outrages, as though it were still in existence. This is erroneous : I have in vain examined the whole building without discovering anything that exhibits the least vestige of it : I have questioned the Greeks and the monks ; but they have no idea of the kind.

The most remarkable thing I saw in the court, through which the just and innocent Jesus, escorted by his implacable enemies, passed to be taken before the tribunal of blood, which had already pronounced his sentence. It was in this same court that Peter had the weakness to deny his master thrice, in consequence of his having ventured, from curiosity, from a desire "to see the end," into a place whence truth and justice were banished ; into a place where Jesus was a prisoner ; a place of which his persecutors and tormentors were the masters : a painful as well as terrible image of the fall of those presumptuous men whom a vain curiosity sometimes detains in the company of the wicked, causing them to brave the danger of betraying their faith ; or of those also who, foremost to show their attachment to justice while she triumphs, hasten with cowardly prudence to conceal their sentiments as soon as persecution takes place, especially when it appears likely to last ; who, deeming it *wise* to await the event in order openly to obey or to disobey their conscience, insensibly take interest, the mere interest of the moment, for their guide, gradually come to care

only about those who can be useful to them, and end by an open and shameful apostacy, as soon as the cause of justice seems to them to be ruined.

Within the monastery there is a very pretty little church, kept extremely neat and adorned with magnificent tapestry. The altar is formed out of the stone which closed the entrance to the Holy Sepulchre. Beside this altar is a small room where you are told Christ was obliged to wait till he was taken into the presence of the high priest.

On Friday, the 3d of April, at daybreak, Jesus, surrounded by a bloodthirsty crowd, was dragged to the palace of Pilate, which is the fourth station. He walked in silence amid the throng, headed by the high priest, the doctors, and the elders of Judah. They went back along the foot of Mount Sion, entered Jerusalem by the Sterquilinian gate, and, passing the Temple, arrived at the Pretorium.

"They would not enter it," says the evangelist, "lest they should be defiled, and prevented from eating the passover."

Thus have there been frequently seen, thus have we ourselves but too often seen wicked men, men athirst for blood, or already stained with it, mingling with their cruelties and their injustice vain scruples not adverse either to rapacity or pride, affecting a sort of tenderness of conscience, and seducing the simple by an appearance of religion.

These chief priests, these senators, fearful of defiling themselves by entering the abode of a heathen magistrate, but who had no fears of defiling themselves when they bought of Judas the prisoner whom they have condemned, and on whose death they are bent—they, who presently will not be afraid to defile themselves with lies and calumnies, in order to wreak their revenge, stop, from religious scruples, at the door of Pilate, who is obliged to go out to give them audience. They denounced to him Jesus as a malefactor: they accused him of exciting the people to rebel, of forbidding the payment of tribute to Cæsar, of calling himself the Christ, of usurping the rights as well as the title of a king; and they had no

doubt that, on their report, Pilate would without farther examination become their accomplice, and immediately pronounce sentence of condemnation. They were disappointed : a feeling of natural equity, very rarely met with, on similar occasions, in a magistrate guided solely by human prudence, at first impelled Pilate to do his duty. He was desirous of learning the motives on which such heavy charges were founded : he went back into the Pretorium, ordered Jesus to be brought before him, questioned him, was told by him that he really called himself a king, but the king of a kingdom which is not of this world : and comprehending, though a gentile, much better than many Christians since his time have comprehended, that such royalty has nothing in common with the royalty of the princes of the world, that it could excite no just alarm for the Cæsars and their throne, he returned, accompanied by Jesus, to his accusers, and solemnly declared that he found no fault at all in him.

But at this moment there was a burst of complaints, murmurs, shouts, fury ; and here began to be betrayed that weakness which was soon to lead to the consummation of the iniquity on the part of the Roman governor, and to the death of the innocent victim. Amidst the tumult, the chief priests cried out that Judea and Galilee were excited to revolt by the seditious discourses of Jesus. At the word Galilee, Pilate, already alarmed by the uproar, and apprehensive of the consequences, recollected that this country was under the jurisdiction of Herod, and thenceforward he was anxious only to get rid both of the accused and the accusers. He sent them, therefore, to the tribunal of the tetrarch, thus timidly referring to his decision charges submitted to his authority, charges which he had consented to examine, the falsehood of which he had himself ascertained, and on which he had definitively pronounced.

The Pretorium, as I have already had occasion to remark, is now nothing but ruins. The existing buildings are occupied by the Turkish governor. There is still to be seen the porch of red marble, which served for the entrance : it is in good preservation. One can no longer

pass through it, because it has been walled up ; but its colour renders it perfectly distinguishable.

The staircase by which our Saviour ascended has been removed to Rome, where it is an object of reverence, under the name of Scala Santa.

You ascend, at the present day, by a way which leads to a spacious court, on the right of which are two long vaults conducting to the gallery, then called Xistum or Xistus. The distance from the preceding station to this is at least thirteen hundred paces.

The fifth station is at the palace of Herod. "And when Herod saw Jesus," says the evangelist, "he was exceeding glad, for he had desired to see him of a long season Then he questioned with him in many words, but he answered him nothing."

Jesus did not even tell him why he would not answer him ; thus punishing, by absolute silence, the pride of him who thought to subject divine wisdom to the caprices of his vain curiosity. But the prince, blind as all those who will not comprehend the things of God, saw nothing but idiocy in a silence which was the chastisement of the hypocrisy with which he strove in some measure to put to the test the knowledge and the power of the incarnate God ; and, passing from curiosity to a not less impious scorn, he ordered him to be arrayed in a white robe, exposed him in this garb of derision to the insults and mockery of the populace, and sent him back to Pilate.

Of the palace where these sacrilegious scenes took place nothing is left but ruins, upon which now stand a few houses inhabited by Turks.

The last station of the Way of the Captivity is, like the first, at the Pretorium, whither Jesus was led back. The Roman governor, who, by his first compliances, had emboldened the calumniators, was affrighted at their audacity, and took a fresh step in iniquity. He knew that the "just man," whose fate was in his hands, had been delivered up to him out of envy alone. He still wished to save him from death ; but, despairing of gaining a complete triumph for his innocence, he pronounced one of those decisions which violence never extorted but from fear ; one of those decisions which have the inevitable

effect of thenceforward laying the magistrate at the mercy of the wicked, and of hurrying him irrevocably into a first double dealing, the mere idea of which, at the outset, would have filled him with horror.

“I will chastise him,” said Pilate, “and let him go :” and he ordered Jesus to be scourged. Ferocious soldiers lacerate with rods or with leathern thongs the body of him in whom the judge had just before publicly declared that he could find no fault at all. The blood starts under the repeated strokes ; they throw over his mangled shoulders a tattered purple garment, put a reed into his hand, place a crown of thorns upon his head, thrust it down with violence, buffet him, spit in his face, and to these cruel outrages they add a mockery still more cruel : they kneel before him and say in horrible derision : “Hail, king of the Jews !”

It was at this moment that Pilate chose to show him to the council of the Jews and to the people. He went up to the Lithostrotos, dragging after him Jesus, exhausted with fatigue, anguish, and ill-usage ; and there, from a gallery which now bears the name of the arcade of the *Ecce Homo*, he presented him to the impatient eyes of the multitude. “Behold the man !” he exclaimed ; and the timid governor, who, out of compassion, thought it his duty to appear inhuman, persuaded himself that, at the sight of so strange a crown, purple robe, and sceptre, the royalty of Jesus, far from being a subject of alarm, would but excite scorn, or perhaps pity, flattered himself that the cruelties which he had authorized, and the bleeding image of which he placed before the eyes of the infuriated mob, would prevent the excesses in which it was desirous of indulging !

“Behold the man !” repeated the tigers, athirst for blood. “Crucify him ! crucify him ! let him be crucified !” and cries of death were raised on all sides. The din of the populace, the increasing tumult, the imprecations, the maledictions, the threats of the wrath of Cæsar, the fear of a general insurrection, agitated, alarmed, disconcerted the magistrate, and gave him up a prey to all the torments that can assail a conscience which, out of weakness or fear, hesitates between the duty of saving an

innocent man and the crime of ordering him to be attached to a cross. A feeling of equity for a moment pervaded his mind : he called for water, washed his hands in public, and exclaimed : " I am innocent of the blood of this just person," and almost at the same moment, seeing nothing but danger in resistance to the popular fury, and by a contradiction the more disgraceful, he pronounced sentence of death, and delivered up that " just person" to be crucified.

The hall where Christ was scourged is now a most filthy place, opposite to the ruins of the Pretorium and in the same street. Scarcely is there to be seen in it a spot on which the knee can rest. Part of the pillar to which Jesus was bound is in the church of the Franciscan Fathers of the Holy Sepulchre, protected by an iron grating ; and you are not allowed to touch it but with a stick of copper. It is exhibited to the veneration of the pious only once a year, on the evening of Good Friday.

In the basement of the Pretorium is a hall, in very good preservation. Here it was that the soldiers threw a robe over the shoulders of Jesus and crowned him with thorns. While the divine Saviour was exposed to their mockery and insults, he was supported by a fragment of a column, now preserved in a chapel of the church of the Holy Sepulchre, of which I have already made mention to you, and which belongs to the Armenians. This fragment, as well as the chapel, is known by the name of *Impropère*, that is, insults, outrages.

The arcade of the *Ecce Homo* was formerly part of a very spacious porch. Above, there has been built a kind of gallery, closed on one side by a wall, in which have been made some very small apertures. In the opposite wall is a window, at which, according to some, Jesus was obliged to appear when Pilate presented him to the people. I am of opinion, with some others, that the gallery was then entirely open.

Now, my dear friend, come along with me to the Road of the Cross : let us explore that sacred road together, and let thoughts of grief, repentance, gratitude, and love, thoughts which the great sacrifice of our Redeemer devoting himself, dying for us, ought to render ever pre-

sent to our minds as well as to our hearts, accompany our steps.

Originally, the Road of the Cross was divided into twelve stations ; now there are reckoned fourteen, because that of the taking down from the cross and that of the Holy Sepulchre have been added.

Nine of these stations are in the streets forming the Via Dolorosa, so that the pilgrim is obliged to refrain from all external signs of piety, if he would avoid the insults and outrages of which Turkish fanaticism is not sparing. I have sometimes ventured to disregard this unworthy treatment ; but I would not advise any one to imitate my temerity. On a way bordered exclusively by Turkish habitations, and frequented by all sorts of persons, it is better to confine one's self to an inward prayer than to provoke abuse and blasphemies. One day, before the house of St. Veronica, I suffered some demonstration of respect to escape me, and instantly a pot of water was flung over me from a window. The wisest thing I could do was not to say a word about it : I passed on in silence.

To satisfy their devotion in some trifling degree, most of the pilgrims seek to touch by stealth the object which marks the station, though frequently covered with spittle, and then to lay their hand upon their heart.

The first station in the Road of the Cross begins at the very spot where the last in the Way of the Captivity ends ; that is, at the Lithostrotos, where Jesus was condemned to die upon the cross.

The Lithostrotos, called in Hebrew Gabbatha, was a terrace, or even a gallery, a kind of balcony paved with marble or stone, as its name indicates, from which Pilate pronounced the sentence of death. It was contiguous to the Pretorium. It is now inclosed in the residence of the Turkish governor. As the avenues to it are guarded by janissaries, you perform this first station at the porch of the Scala, situated in the lowest part of Jerusalem. Formerly, the pilgrims were allowed to go up to the arcade ; according to some travellers, the places where Jesus stood when he was condemned, and where the Roman governor addressed the people when he passed sentence, were

pointed out. "The pilgrims who have the honour to ascend it," says a writer of the time, "fall on their knees before the first, and kiss it with great respect, but abhor and execrate the second as they would the seat of the plague."

The second station is on the spot where Jesus, delivered up to his implacable enemies, was hurried away through a furious mob, loading him with imprecations, to be burdened with his cross, which he was to bear to Calvary. There is nothing to indicate the exact point of this station. After the example of other pilgrims, I held it about twenty paces from the first.

To reach the third, you must pass under the arcade of the *Eccē Homo*. At the end of the street turning to the left, near a Turkish bath you come to a prostrate column of red marble, which, according to tradition, marks the spot where our Saviour fainted for the first time under the weight of the instrument of his execution.

Forty paces farther, you enter a street which leads to the *Via Dolorosa*, in which there was formerly a church, known by the name of *Notre Dame des Sept-Douleurs*: this is the fourth station. On this spot it was that Mary, thrust back by the soldiers, met her son toiling under the weight of the ignominious wood on which he was about to die. Without making explicit mention of this meeting, the evangelists infer it in their narratives by showing us the blessed Virgin on Calvary, at the moment of the death of Jesus; and the tradition of it, which is still preserved, supported by the testimony of several great saints, dates from very high antiquity.

Sixty paces farther begins the fifth station, at the foot of the hill which leads to Golgotha. Here it was that Christ, exhausted by his long sufferings, stumbled; and that the Jews, eager for his blood, stopped a Cyrenean, and forced him to bear the cross. "And as they led him away, they laid hold upon one Simon, a Cyrenean, coming out of the country, and on him they laid the cross, that he might bear it after Jesus."

Proceeding about eighty paces, you come to the sixth station. It is the house of Veronica, or, more correctly speaking, the spot on which stood that house, the very

ruins of which have disappeared, and on which is now seen the dwelling of a Greek family. You are shown the place where that heroic woman, forcing her way through the soldiers and the crowd which surrounded Jesus, and, throwing herself at his feet, wiped his distorted features, the impression of which was left upon the cloth which had touched the august face of the Saviour of the world.

About one hundred paces from the house of St. Veronica, is the Judgment gate, through which malefactors passed who were to be executed on Calvary. This gate is walled up for half its height; behind, you can perceive the stone pillar on which the sentence of Pilate was posted. It is upright, and may be seen at a distance.

It is about eighty paces from the Judgment gate to the place where Jesus fell, for, the second time, under the weight of his cross, and which forms the seventh station. It is marked by an incision made in a stone in the wall.

From the Judgment gate to the top of Calvary, the ascent begins to be steeper.

The eighth station is about thirty fathoms from the preceding. It may be known by a thick column, placed before a doorway of mean appearance, and which is walled up. It was there that Christ spoke to the women of Jerusalem, who were shedding tears over his fate, and exhorted them to weep for themselves.

The way which formerly led to Calvary, and along which our Saviour passed, no longer exists; it is covered with houses, amidst which is the ninth station, likewise marked by a thick column, the approach to which Turkish fanaticism has taken delight to render disagreeable, by heaping up filth against it for the purpose of keeping off the Christians. To visit the holy hill, the pilgrim is obliged to follow a new way formed at the distance of fifty paces.

The tenth and the last four stations are in the immense church of the Holy Sepulchre, which, as I have already had occasion to remark to you, contains the place where Jesus was stripped of his garments and gall was handed to him to quench his thirst; that where he was nailed to the cross; Calvary, where he expired upon the cross; and the tomb in which he was laid.

I have thus, my dear friend, described to you briefly, but as accurately as I could, the places which our Saviour traversed in the course of his long passion. The facts which this sketch presents for our meditation had been foretold seven hundred years before by Isaiah, and God had then shown them as if accomplished. The prophet had seen the man of sorrows suffering and dying for us. Under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit he had written.

“He was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities ; the chastisement of our peace was upon him, and with his stripes we are healed Yet it pleased the Lord to bruise him, yea, to put him to grief. (Isaiah, liii. 5 and 10.)

At no time and in no place will these wounds with which Jesus was covered for our transgressions, that chastisement which was upon him and which earned our peace, those stripes by which we have been healed, that bruising for our iniquities, produce a deeper, a more salutary, a more efficacious impression than at Jerusalem, and on the way itself, which was moistened by the tears, the sweat, and the blood of Christ.

When, turning over the annals of human justice, I there read the punishment inflicted by it on a malefactor, let it be stamped with ever so little of an unjust and useless severity, I am apt to forget the crime and feel concern for the perpetrator : the voice of humanity silences that sentiment of rigid equity, which tells my reason that the criminal ought to be punished and society avenged ; and I find in my heart nothing but pity.

If, casting my eyes farther, I chance to fix them upon a sentence in which justice has erred, if evident proofs of the innocence of him on whom her sword has fallen are unfolded to my view, strange as this man may be to my affections, to my religion, to my country, my soul is moved, is filled with indignation, groans, deplores the mistake or the accursed iniquity, and the punishment of the condemned becomes to me also a punishment.

But here, continuing to turn over the history of human judgments, I am suddenly stopped by one of those sentences of death which are but too common in those accursed periods, fortunately rare in the course of ages,

when things and actions the most glorious, the most honourable, have lost their character of honour and glory ; when even the affections, when the tenderest, the purest, the most sacred ties are considered by the law and its organs as merely a sort of complicity with the persons to whom these affections, these ties, unite us. It is a sentence which sent to the scaffold a father, in whom the justice *of the time* thought fit to punish the crime of a son whom parental tenderness refused to deliver up to the executioner ; and this father died resigned, content, joyful, at thus saving the life of his son ! Oh ! then I can no longer control the emotions that agitate my soul : thoughts the most agonizing, the most soothing, crowd upon it, jostling and driving back one another ; and, amid this conflict, which becomes to me an inexpressible torment, a voice, bursting from my bosom, cries : Ah ! had that father been thy father !

“ Had that father been my father ! ” At this last idea, words fail me ; and I suffer my tears to flow in silence.

How would it be, if, all at once transported to the very spot where this father was tried, dragged to execution, sacrificed, I were to penetrate into the hall where this iniquitous sentence was pronounced ; I were to see there, with my own eyes, both the place where sat the judges and that occupied by him whose only crime was to have given me life and to love me ; if, going thence, I were to traverse the way which he passed to suffer, and reaching the very spot where the scaffold was erected, treading the very ground that was stained with his blood

What am I about, my dear friend ! all this will not tell you what my soul here feels. He who passed along the Road of the Cross, whose steps I have followed from Gethsemane to Calvary, is to me and to all Christians more than a benefactor, more than a friend, more than a father : it is the innocent Jesus, sacrificing himself for the guilty ; it is my Redeemer, my Saviour, my God !

LETTER XXIV.

Mount of Olives—Valley of Jehoshaphat—Brook Cedron—Church of the Virgin Mary—Tombs of Joseph, Joachim, and Anna—Admirable View of the Mount of Olives—Foot-Print left at the Ascension—Chapel on the Spot where Christ taught his Disciples the Lord's Prayer—Place where the Apostles composed the Profession of Faith.

Jerusalem, February 20th, 1832.

I CONTINUE my excursions, my dear friends, sometimes on horseback, at others on foot, sometimes in company, sometimes alone ; and, whatever I may have been told, my heart frequently brings me back to the Via Dolorosa. The Turks begin to get used to my dress, and to my spectacles, which at first excited great notice. Most of them take me for a physician, and I am sometimes stopped in the streets both by men and women, who insist on my feeling their pulse. This reputation of physician originated in a petty lie of my dragoman's, who hazarded it one day to facilitate for me the approach to Omar's mosque.

The mistaken notion of the people respecting my profession gave rise to visits and to solicitations which became extremely annoying to me. I have therefore positively enjoined Jacob to contradict the reports which he had himself circulated on this subject, and I am somewhat quieter ; I say somewhat, because several persons suppose that it is but a subterfuge on my part.

Hitherto I have been but rarely insulted : some stones have been flung at me ; I received them, if I may be allowed to say so, with all the resignation, all the submission of a pilgrim wending his way along the Via Dolorosa ; or, if you please, I affected not to notice these insults : it was the only way to put an end to them.

My favourite walk is to the Mount of Olives. The way thither leads through St. Stephen's gate and the valley of Jehoshaphat ; you cross the brook Cedron over a bridge of a single arch. On reaching the foot of the hill, you have on your left the church which contains the tombs of the Virgin Mary, Joseph, Joachim, Anna, and the grotto of the Agony ; on the right is the garden of Gethsemane,

which I have already described. I will say a few words concerning those places, of which I have not given you any account.

The valley of Jehoshaphat is called in Scripture the valley of Sara, the Royal Valley, the valley of Melchisedeck. Hither it was that the king of Sodom came to congratulate Abraham, after the victory gained by that patriarch over the five kings. It is situated between the Mount of Olives and Mount Moriah. Its appearance is extremely gloomy : the Gothic walls of Jerusalem, which crown it on the west side, throw over it a shadow, a kind of darkness, well adapted to make the mind persevere in those serious reflections which the very name of Jehoshaphat must naturally excite. It appears to have been in all ages a place of sepulture : the eye cannot there rest upon anything but trophies of death. You find tombs of the highest antiquity ; you find others of yesterday. It is towards this valley that the Jews, scattered over the face of the earth, cast their eyes ; thousands of them, even in the flower of their age, quit the country of their birth, in the hope of being one day buried there. Their supulchral stones are innumerable ; they completely cover the Mount of Offence,* extend along the brook Cedron, and rise behind the tombs of Absalom, Zachariah, and Jehoshaphat, to the road leading to Bethany. The village of Siloa is so encompassed by them, that it appears to form part of this vast cemetery of the Israelites.

The valley of Jehoshaphat is a valley of mystery. Its name, which signifies the judgment of God, awakens in the mind thoughts at once soothing and awful, an ineffable mixture of hope and fear.

According to the prophet Joel, mankind shall here appear some day before the Supreme Judge. "I will gather all nations, and will bring them down to the valley of Jehoshaphat, and plead with them there."

I had brought with me Massillon's Sermon on the Last Judgment : imagine, if you can, what conflicting feelings and emotions seized my soul, when, seated on a solitary rock in that valley, the genuine region of death, and full

* A name given to this mount when Solomon became a backslider.

of the thought of the dreadful day of retribution and punishment, I read the following words :

“What a change of scene in the world ! Then will all scandals be removed from the kingdom of Christ, and the righteous, completely separated from the sinners, will form a chosen nation, a holy race, the church of the first-born, whose names will be written in heaven ; then will the commerce with the wicked, inevitable upon earth, no longer cause the faith of the just to mourn, and their innocence to tremble ; then, their lot having nothing farther in common with that of the infidels and the hypocrites, the righteous will not be constrained to be witnesses of the crimes of the wicked, or ministers of their passions ; then, all the bands of society, of authority, or of dependence, which attached them here below to the impious and the worldling, being dissolved, they will no longer say with the prophet : O Lord, why prolongest thou our exile and our abode here ? our souls are dried up with sorrow at the sight of the crimes and the iniquity of which the earth is full — Then will their tears be changed into joy, and their lamentations to thanksgiving ; they will pass to the right like the sheep, and the left will be for the goats, for the wicked.

“The world being thus arranged, all the nations of the earth thus separated, each motionless on the spot which shall have been allotted to them ; surprise, terror, despair, confusion, painted in the face of the one ; in that of the other, joy, serenity, confidence ; the eyes of the righteous uplifted towards the Son of Man, from whom they expect their deliverance ; those of the wicked, fixed in a frightful manner upon the ground, and almost piercing the abysses with their looks, as if to mark already the place that is destined for them : the King of Glory, says the Gospel, placed between the two masses, will advance, and turning towards those on his right, he shall say, with a look full of benignity and majesty, capable of itself to console them for all their past afflictions : ‘Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world The wicked have ever considered you as the refuse, the most useless part of the world ; let them now learn that the world sub-

sisted for your sake only, that all things were made for you, and that the end of all things is come now, that your number is completed. Leave at length that earth where ye have ever been but strangers and travellers; follow me in the ways of my glory and my felicity, as ye have followed me in those of my humiliations and my sufferings. Your toils have lasted but for a moment; the happiness which ye are about to enjoy shall never end.'

"Then, turning to the left, with wrath in his eyes, darting hither and thither looks terrible as avenging lightnings on the multitude of the wicked, with a voice, says the prophet, which shall rend asunder the bowels of the abyss to swallow them up, he will say: 'Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels! Ye were the elect of the world, ye are the accursed of my Father. Your pleasures have been rapid and transient; your torments shall be eternal.'

"Then will the righteous, caught up into the air with the Son of Man, begin to sing this heavenly song: Thou art rich in mercy, O Lord, and thou hast crowned thy gifts! . . . Then will the wicked curse the author of their being, and the fatal day which gave them birth; or rather they will be filled with fury against themselves, as the authors of their own misery and ruin: the abysses will open, the skies will descend. The wicked, says the Gospel, shall go into everlasting punishment, but the righteous to life eternal."

At this place, my friend, the book dropped from my hand; my agitated spirit was no longer master of itself: I heard the awful tramp; the graves around me opened before my face; I saw phantoms, confused shapes, issuing from them. My blood curdled in my veins. I felt ready to faint at the thought of that abode of happiness to which the righteous were about to be called, of that place of horror into which the wicked would be hurled. Covering my face with both hands, I exclaimed, in consternation: O, my soul, what shall be thy lot?

The brook Cedron, I have already told you, runs through the valley of Jehoshaphat; it is about twenty paces from the garden of Gethsemane. David crossed it when pursued by Absalom; it is most celebrated on ac-

count of our Lord's passion. Several writers have asserted that at certain times its water is of a reddish colour ; I can affirm that such is not the fact. Never was there so wet a year as this : for six successive days the rain fell in torrents ; nevertheless, I have always found the brook so dry, that I should scarcely have been able to wash my hands in it. I have been assured that in several places the water has been turned off for the purpose of being conducted into reservoirs.

The church of the Virgin Mary, opposite to the garden of Gethsemane, and by the side of the grotto of the Agony, is itself an immense grotto, a work of extraordinary labour, inasmuch as it has been hewn out of the rock : it is indisputably one of the most considerable works executed by the inhabitants of Palestine and Asia Minor. You descend to it by a magnificent flight of steps, fifteen feet wide ; these steps, fifty in number, are of marble. At bottom is the tomb of the Virgin, in a small chapel, where a great quantity of silver and golden lamps are kept burning night and day. A dome rises above the altar, at which mass is performed.

Nearly in the middle, on the left, is the tomb of Joseph ; on the right, are those of Joachim and Anna.

This church belonged formerly to the Latins ; it is now the joint property of the Greeks and the Armenians ; and M. de Chateaubriand is mistaken when he says that the Catholics "are in possession of Mary's tomb."

About a hundred paces from this tomb, and not far from Gethsemane, is the spot where, notwithstanding the uncertainty of the traditions on this subject, the Christians of the East maintain that the wonders of the Assumption of the mother of Jesus took place.

From this spot you begin to ascend the Mount of Olives, which is very steep. Nothing can exceed the surprise which you feel when, having reached midway, on turning about you perceive Jerusalem before you. It no longer appears to be that ruined city, whose filthy, narrow, and crooked streets make such a profound and disagreeable impression upon strangers. The tower of David ; the cupolas of the church of the Holy Sepulchre ; the mosque of Omar, built in the centre of the space,

where of old stood the temple of Solomon ; the houses which surround it ; that multitude of minarets ; the convents of St. Saviour, of the Greeks, and of the Armenians ; those embattled walls that encompass the city ; the Gilded Gate : the gate of St. Stephen ; those forsaken churches, the ruins of which distance prevents the eye from discerning—all these impart to the Holy City an aspect of grandeur and magnificence which strike the pilgrim and long rivet his gaze.

From the summit of this mount, directing your steps to the left, you pass through a field of olives, and then arrive at considerable remains of buildings known by the name of *Viri Galilæi*. As these are the first words addressed by the angels to the disciples who witnessed the ascension of our Saviour, when they asked them, “ why stand ye gazing up into heaven ? ” (Acts i. 9) several have conjectured that this was the spot where Mary, the Apostles, and the one hundred and twenty disciples, beheld our Lord ascend to heaven. Others assert that the appellation given to these remains is derived from the circumstance that, before the time of Jesus Christ, they were the resort of the Galileans who came to Jerusalem to hold the Passover. What gives some probability to the latter opinion is, the considerable distance of this point from the place of the ascension. It is at least three hundred paces.

The first time that I explored the Mount of Olives, on proceeding eastward amidst Turkish sepulchres, I perceived all at once the Dead Sea, the plain of Jericho, the Jordan, and beyond it the mountains of Arabia Petræa. Though nearly seven leagues distant, that plain, studded here and there with verdure, that sea, that river, appeared to be at my feet.

What a view ! what recollections it awakened in my mind ! how impatient it made me to see those objects nearer ! But then, again, how much stronger became my fears that I should not be able to accomplish this purpose ! I could not take my eyes from the scene before me : I could distinctly discern the Jordan, though it flows in a very deep bed : several fires were burning on the resinous shores of the Dead Sea.

The weather was fine ; I felt well : for a long time I had not been so happy. I passed several hours, with the telescope in my hand, on the summit of the hill ; and I can declare that I shall reckon them amongst the most agreeable of my life.

Going back, as if to return to Jerusalem, but still on the summit of the hill, you come to a mosque, on the site of which formerly stood a most magnificent church, erected by St. Helena, on the very spot where Christ ascended to heaven after his resurrection. This mosque, which threatens to fall to ruin, is surrounded by wretched houses inhabited by Turks.

In the centre, in a kind of chapel, is to be seen the print left in the rock by the left foot of our Saviour, at the moment of rising from the earth and ascending to heaven. It is asserted that formerly the print of the right foot also was to be seen there, but that the Turks removed and buried it, for the purpose of conveying it afterwards to the mosque of the Temple. The very scanty information that I obtained does not permit me to say anything positive on this subject.

As for the print of the left foot, it is so distinct as to leave no doubt of its existence, though it is somewhat worn by the innumerable kisses which the pilgrims have for so many ages been in the habit of giving it, and perhaps also by some petty thefts which strict vigilance has not always been able to prevent.

This part of the rock, now enclosed with masonry, is committed to the custody of a santon, a kind of Turkish monk, who is enjoined to oppose the commission of the slightest injury. This santon is provided with small square stones, with which he touches the foot-mark of our Lord, and which he then offers to the pilgrims, who give him a trifle in exchange.

To judge from the direction of the foot, our Saviour, when he ascended to heaven, must have had his face turned towards the north.

The Catholics, the Greeks, and the Armenians, having previously purified this mosque, hold mass in it on Ascension-day.

Descending the Mount of Olives on the opposite side

to that on which I went up, you come, at the distance of eighty paces from the mosque, to an ancient chapel, where Jesus taught his disciples the Lord's Prayer ; that admirable prayer which authorizes the Christian, imbued by the salutary precepts, and formed by the instruction of his Saviour himself, to venture to give to God the fond name of father ; to consider himself as his child ; and to solicit with confidence of his omnipotent paternity those favours and blessings which can alone impart the portion of happiness that man is permitted to enjoy on earth, and insure to him the immense and everlasting felicity of the life to come.

Farther on are the ruins of a kind of reservoir, remarkable for twelve arcades or vaulted niches, beneath which one person only can enter at a time. Here it was, according to tradition, that the apostles, before they separated, composed together that symbol by which the believers were to recognise one another. On reflecting that the twelve poor fishermen, with whom this symbol originated had met in this place, perhaps on the very spot where I stood ; that there, as in their first temple, they had begun solitarily to recite that creed which now resounds in all the temples in the world—I sank upon my knees before the humble ruins which I beheld. “I believe in God,” I exclaimed, and, in the effusion of my soul, I continued to recite the apostolic profession of faith.

I shall not tell you, my dear Charles, what absolutely new feelings were excited in me, by the words of that august symbol, as they escaped from my lips or rather from my heart : never had I uttered them with such deep emotion. But I must communicate to you some of the thoughts which thronged into my mind, and the meditation on which completely engrossed me for some time. To me that creed was a magnificent and ineffable marvel—that creed, the work of a few ignorant and unlettered men—that creed, which, issuing from a corner of Judea, spread throughout the whole world, and became the symbol not only of nations, but likewise of all the truly great and still more of all the really virtuous men who have since existed, imparting to the most timid courage and strength to defy persecution and death, and everywhere

triumphing over tyrants as well as philosophers, over sophistries as well as scaffolds. But what produced in me a much more lively impression, because the thought had not yet occurred to me, was that here, on this spot, the creed no longer appeared to me vaguely as containing a mere profession of religious faith, but as comprehending also a real deposition of witnesses attesting the certainty of the facts on which the whole doctrine of salvation rests. I considered that, by a particular arrangement of Providence, this testimony was constant, perpetual, fixed, amidst nations all the generations of which are hurried by a rapid movement to the grave ; and I admired with a sort of ecstasy the light which infinite wisdom has been pleased to shed around its works, that the truth may appear more striking to the well disposed, and that its brightness may disconcert the wicked. Most assuredly, in order to prove the facts of the gospel history, it ought to suffice that they had been publicly attested on the very spots where they took place, that they had been confirmed by witnesses in presence of the chiefs of the people and the magistrates, and sealed by them with their blood. What would become of the certainty of numberless facts, which no one doubts, if those who saw them, who have related them, could not have gained credit for them but by the sacrifice of their lives ! Even this, however, was not enough in the merciful designs of the divine wisdom : it determined not only that the facts of the birth, passion, crucifixion, death, and resurrection of our Saviour should be recorded in the creed, but that this testimony of the apostles should be reinforced by the testimony of all the contemporary Christians ; and that, expressed by the same symbol, it should be repeated from age to age, by all those who should become members of the church of Christ : that at all times and in all places, in persecution as in the lap of peace, in private meetings as in public, in the bosom of families as in the temples, it should not cease for a day to be proclaimed : so that, from the united voices of the whole Christian world, there should result but one single and only testimony, connected, if I may be allowed the expression, by the first link with the very facts to which it relates ; and by the last, with that glorious and trium-

phant cross with which, upon the awful day, Jesus shall again appear upon earth to judge both those who have believed and those who shall have refused to believe.

A hundred paces from the spot which suggested these grave reflections, you come to some grottoes, called, I know not why, the Tombs of the Prophets. Near these, on a rapid and stony descent, which continues to the foot of the Mount of Olives, you see the remains of some buildings near a rock called the Rock of the Prediction, because it was here that Jesus, surveying Jerusalem, wept over it, saying :—

“ If thou hadst known, even thou, at least in this thy day, the things which belong unto thy peace ! but now they are hid from thine eyes. For the days shall come upon thee, that thine enemies shall cast a trench about thee, and compass thee round and keep thee in on every side, and shall lay thee even with the ground, and thy children within thee : and they shall not leave in thee one stone upon another, because thou knowest not the time of thy visitation.”

Words which, according to my custom, I read on the spot, and kneeling.

History has remarked that, by a peculiar permission of Providence, at the time of the siege of the guilty city, the tent of Titus was pitched on the precise spot where the Lord had foretold the destruction of Jerusalem.

LETTER XXV.

Changeable Temperature at Jerusalem—Aspect of that City during and after Lent—Aceldama, or Field of Blood—Valley of Gehennon—Tombs hewn out of the Rock—Well of Nehemiah—Fountain of Siloa—Village of Siloa—Mount of Offence—Tomb of Absalom—Tomb of Barrachias—Tomb of Zachariah—Tomb of Jehoshaphat—Tombs of the Kings—Tombs of the Judges.

Jerusalem, February 27th, 1832.

I PROSECUTE my excursions with ardour, my dear friend, and thanks be to God, notwithstanding my fatigues, notwithstanding the fickleness of the weather, which, on

the same day, is at one time scorching, at another very wet, and at another extremely cold, I am very well, with the exception of some slight inconveniences. Never, indeed, have I known such a climate as this : it has happened that in the morning the heat has been suffocating, and at night snow has fallen in considerable quantity. At Jerusalem, everything bears the mark of the curse with which that hapless city has been stricken. All there is extraordinary, all is dull ; the sports of the boys in the streets are frequently noisy ; you hear at times loud cries, but mirth appears to be banished from among them.

In the course of the year, Jerusalem presents itself under two very different aspects. He who should see that city only, during Lent, certainly could not form any correct idea of it. Then, ten thousand pilgrims, Greeks, Armenians, Russians, Syrians, Copts, throng thither, and give it for some time the appearance of a city full of life and bustle. At this period, however, it is but a dressed-up corpse, the features of which are covered by a deceitful mask, and which, when stripped, shows only the sad reality—death and its hideous ravages. The few shops that are open during Lent are afterwards shut up, at least most of them ; the streets are again deserted, or, if you see a few persons in them, it is on the terraces, upon which they come half naked, to rid themselves in the sunshine of the vermin which they cannot entirely destroy. On Friday, Saturday, and Sunday, you see outside the gates a few Turkish, Jewish, or Christian inhabitants, walking about, the men apart from the women, who are veiled from head to foot. It is in general to the cemeteries that they bend their steps. The husband, as he passes his wife, affects not to notice her ; and the wife does the same in regard to the child, which an unhappy slave carries carelessly behind her.

The day before yesterday, it was scarcely light when I was already at the Jaffa gate. I intended to visit the Aceldama, or field of blood, the well of Nehemiah, the fountain of Siloa, and the tombs of Absalom, Jehoshaphat, and Zachariah. Accompanied by my dragoman, on quitting the city, I took the road on the left ; I passed close to a very large pool, now dry, which bears the character

of high antiquity. It is known by the name of Bathsheba's pool.

After half an hour's walk, I reached the Potter's field, bought by the priests with the thirty pieces of silver which Judas had carried back to them, and which they would not put into the treasury again, because it was the price of blood. It was appropriated to the burial of strangers. It is a common notion among the Jews that Judas was buried there.

This ground is long but narrow. St. Helena caused it to be enclosed by walls. The Armenians, who are in possession of it, sell to the pilgrims the right of being interred there. It serves also as a cemetery for the Caraites, a sect of Jews, who reject traditions and adhere exclusively to the letter of Scripture.

A circumstance worthy of notice, and which my dragoman pointed out to me, is that in this ground you find a great quantity of potsheards, or fragments of earthen vessels, indicating the profession of its ancient proprietor. I picked up several, in which may be discovered the impress of high antiquity.

On the left is the valley of Gehennon, or Behennon, the accursed valley, where the impious kings who reigned for some time over Israel erected a temple to the god Moloch, to whom the people, having become idolaters, sacrificed children by placing them in the arms of his heated statue.

This valley is very deep. The wind, which blew with violence through the crevices and clefts in the rocks, reminded me of the shrieks of the infants consigned to the embrace of the burning idol.

On the right is an uninterrupted series of tombs cut out of the rock, the real origin of which it appears impossible to ascertain. Some writers date them back beyond our era; others conjecture that they existed in part at the time of Adrian, during the interval of peace which the Christians enjoyed under that emperor after the dispersion of the Jews. I went into several of these abodes of death; they are almost all alike. In some of them are to be seen remains of inscriptions in Hebrew and Greek, so mutilated that they cannot be read. Most of these

tombs are a series of chambers containing a great quantity of oblong cells, destined for the sepulchres of the dead. The doorways are in general so low that you cannot enter them without creeping on all-fours, like the brute animals.

On sallying from one of these sepulchres, I was not a little surprised to find myself face to face with an ill-looking Turk, who, armed with a musket, asked me for a *bakschisch* (a donation), with an insolent air. As I was unarmed and he supposed that I was alone, his insolence increased, till he saw a turban popping out of the same hole from which I had crawled: it was that of my dragoman. Notwithstanding the presence of Jacob, he insisted on having money, declaring that, the week before, an Englishman on a like occasion had given him a couple of crowns. I desired Jacob to tell him that this was a proof that the Englishman was richer than I was, and, in spite of his cries and importunities, I persisted in my refusal.

It is a lamentable thing that, in the environs of Jerusalem, as throughout all Palestine, a stranger cannot go abroad by himself without running the risk of being robbed or even murdered. The most interesting excursions are almost always disturbed by that kind of *qui vive* on which you are obliged to be when you go without attendants. On this point I have frequently committed imprudences, which might have cost me dear. It is to be hoped that, if the pacha keeps Palestine, the depredations of the Arabs will be repressed;* and that strangers will

* At the moment when this page is going to press, I learn that forty thousand Arabs have rushed upon unfortunate Jerusalem; that, for the nineteenth time, it has been taken and pillaged, and that the Jews have suffered most. The plunder and slaughter lasted six days, and the arrival of Ibrahim's army alone put an end to them. When, after the reflexions which conclude the twenty-second of these letters, after quoting the prophecy of Daniel relative to the curse pronounced upon the deicide city, I added: "I see but too plainly that the desolation continues;" I was far from supposing that a more terrible catastrophe than anything that met my view was destined so soon to furnish a new proof of it. Here follow some particulars which I find in a letter recently published on the subject.

Jerusalem, July 16th, 1834.

"My residence in this city, and particularly my excursions among
VOL. I.—16

be able to travel with that safety which, in general, everywhere attends them in Egypt.

Having proceeded a whole hour, sometimes along easy

the Arabs, had enabled me since my arrival to ascertain that the people are extremely dissatisfied with Ibrahim, and that they are more especially exasperated because the young men are taken away for the purpose of recruiting the army. I learned that an extensive conspiracy was on the point of breaking out, and that I should do well to leave Palestine. It was unfortunately too late; I was obliged to stay. No sooner had the pacha set out for Jaffa, than the revolution broke out. The garrisons of Herek and Solth were cut in pieces, and the Arabs of Samaria and Hebron marched to Jerusalem. The pacha had left but six hundred men in that city, and the assailants fell upon it to the number of forty thousand. A few pieces of cannon, placed upon the walls, would have been sufficient to keep off these hostile hordes, which had no other arms than lances and muskets; but the Arabs had discovered a subterranean passage which was not guarded; they made their entry at midnight, and the soldiers, after a vigorous resistance, were obliged to retire to the citadel. All the Christians fled to the different convents, where they found safety.

"For five or six days, the city was given up to pillage. It was an awful sight. The Jews were the chief sufferers; their houses were sacked, their women insulted, violated. The heart heaves at the recital of such horrible atrocities. The hope, no doubt, of obtaining great ransoms caused the convents to be spared. To crown all these misfortunes, a violent earthquake overthrew several houses and destroyed part of the wall adjoining to the mosque. At Bethlehem, the convent fell almost in ruins, and nearly all the inhabitants were buried beneath them. The shocks continued for ten days, but none of the shocks was so violent as the first. The pacha, on being apprized of this event, marched off in the utmost haste with five thousand men from Jaffa.

"It is but twelve hours' march from Jaffa to Jerusalem, and the pacha was three days and a half before he could come to our relief. More than thirty thousand Arab peasants had assembled on the heights, and, when the troops had entered the narrow ravines and defiles, the Arabs, availing themselves of the elevated position which they occupied, rolled down upon their heads prodigious masses of rock, and the passage was rendered impracticable for cavalry and artillery. The activity and courage of Ibrahim, nevertheless, triumphed over all obstacles, and he entered Jerusalem victorious. The sanguinary war which the pacha continues to wage with the Arabs does not admit of leaving the city. But, the first occasion that offers, mounting my dromedary, I will fly, swift as the wind, across the desert to Cairo or Alexandria, and proceed to Europe."

roads, bordered by lands, more or less cultivated ; at others, having to climb tracks cut in the rocks, where you meet with a few sepulchral caverns ; we arrived at the extremity of the valley which we had been skirting since we entered the Aeldama, and which adjoins that of Jehoshaphat. Thence proceeding to the right, we arrived at the well of Nehemiah. This well is so called, because Nehemiah, on his return from Babylon, there found the sacred fire which the priests had concealed in it by command of Jeremiah. It is very deep, and surrounded by the ruins of buildings which resemble the ruins of a mosque, and in which are reservoirs, whither the cattle repair to slake their thirst. Notwithstanding its great depth, sometimes, especially in rainy winters, it is so full as to run over ; and this, according to the general notion, is a sign that the year will be productive. In such circumstances, the Bedouins never fail to come and demand donations from the inhabitants of Jerusalem, who are themselves eager to go and see the water running through the valley. They wash their carpets and their garments in it. It is a sort of public festival, to which almost all repair, and which gives them the more pleasure because it very rarely occurs. It is the only time at which you perceive any joy amid these regions of death. And what is the object of this joy?—why, a paltry stream, which in a few days will be dry, and which is frequently but a deceitful token of fertility—a striking image of all the vain and transient joys of this world.

After my visit to the well of Nehemiah, I turned back to see the fountain of Siloa. By the way, my dragoman, pointed out to me a very aged mulberry-tree, which marks the spot where the prophet Isaiah was sawn asunder. At the distance of two hundred paces is the fountain of Siloa, to which Jesus sent the blind man, whom he had cured with a little clay.

“As Jesus passed by, he saw a man which was blind from his birth He spat upon the ground, and made clay of the spittle, and he anointed the eyes of the blind man with the clay ; and said unto him, Go, wash in the pool of Siloam, which is, by interpretation, sent. He

went his way, therefore, and washed, and came seeing.” (John ix. 1, 6, 7.)

This pool is lined with stone in front and at the entrance; you descend into it by about twenty steps, rudely cut in the rock. It is said to have formerly been highly decorated. The spring issues from a rock, and exhibits this peculiarity, that its water has periodically an ebb and flow, the effect of which is alternately to accelerate and slacken the velocity with which it runs. All the Christians by whom it is visited wash their eyes in it, in memory of the miracle wrought by our Saviour.

Opposite is the village of Siloa, inhabited by Arabs notorious for ferocity. The women of the place go habitually to the fountain for their supply of water. Several of them were there at the moment when I went down to it. As soon as they saw my white dress, which was quite strange to them, they set up loud cries: seeing that it was impossible to get away without passing me, they screamed like maniacs. To no purpose my dragoon told them not to be afraid, that I was only a white pilgrim—they shrieked the louder. I was obliged to go up again, and to retire to some distance, to allow them to pass. Away they scampered as fast as they could, and I went down again to the fountain.

Jacob had taken care to bring a bottle: I filled it, carried it home to my cell, and, at night, seated at a crazy table, upon which figured nothing save a small loaf of wheat grown in the Holy Land, and a bottle of water from Siloa, I made a more delicious meal than any of which I ever partook in gilded apartments, or at the table of kings.

On leaving the fountain of Siloa, I again passed through the valley of Jehoshaphat, leaving behind me Mount Moriah and the site of Solomon's temple, and I soon found myself at the foot of the Mount of Offence, before the tomb of Absalom. It is a quadrangular monument, formed of a single block of stone, about eight or ten feet square. It is adorned with twenty-four columns of the Doric order, equally distributed on each side. Above rises a sort of pyramid, which appeared to me not to be-

long to the same block, and the height of which is not in proportion with the tomb.

On one side is seen a kind of sepulchre, where, according to a very ancient tradition, the Christians of the East believe that the apostle James secreted himself when Jesus was apprehended, protesting that he would not leave it till he had witnessed the accomplishment of the prophecies and the resurrection of our Saviour. Some conjecture that it is the tomb of Barachias, who was killed between the porch and the altar. This monument, raised above twenty feet above the road, is adorned with four pillars of very good effect.

The tomb of Zachariah, which is seen close at hand, is of one single block, like that of Absalom. A little farther on is a sort of square room, hewn out of the rock, and the doorway of which is in a remarkable style. This is the tomb of Jehoshaphat. Almost buried already under the mould and rubbish which are daily rolling down upon it, this tomb will soon be entirely lost. The labour of a few workmen for some hours would be sufficient to clear it; but such is the stupidity of the government, that, if I had solicited permission to remove the earth at my own expense, I could not have obtained it.

What treasures must be buried beneath rubbish, under a soil which you dare neither dig into nor stir, for fear of exposing yourself to persecutions, to oppressions, to enormous extortions! No part of the world has perhaps so many valuable objects buried under its ruins as Jerusalem and its environs. Every shower that washes down a little mould in general, lays bare medals or rare coins, almost all of which fall into the hands of the Arabs. When the rain is over, they are seen hastening from Siloa to Mount Moriah, and skirting the sides of the hill, to pick them up. They carry them to the Jews, who buy them for a trifle, and afterwards make the pilgrims pay dearly for them.

The medals of Constantine, and particularly of St. Helena, are in great request with the Greeks; I have myself found several of them. One day, I met a Turk, who had in his hand a small bronze statue, about six inches high, representing a warrior clothed in mail,

brandishing a club over his head. This figure, which, no doubt, he had just found, seemed to me to come from a tomb. I signified a desire to have it, and he disposed of it at a very cheap rate.

Soon afterwards, having learned that the braziers bought antiquities of this kind by weight, and trafficked with them, I went with my dragoman to the one whom he pointed out to me as doing most business, and begged him to bring me whatever he had curious and rare. On the next day but one, the fellow came very mysteriously to bring me an old piece of copper, assuring me that it was a fragment of the ancient gilded gate leading to the Temple, through which our Lord passed on Palm-Sunday. He could not have told me anything more false and absurd: I was not his dupe. The air of sincerity with which he talked to me disguised something more than cunning. This brazier was a Greek.

After the excursions of which I have just given you an account, I determined to visit the Tombs of the Kings and those of the Judges, and devoted yesterday to this purpose.

The Tombs of the Kings are about a quarter of a league from the Holy City. On going out at the Damascus gate, after proceeding some distance along a stony road, whence the eye perceives here and there a few olive-trees planted in a rocky and sterile soil, you descend by a rapid slope into a kind of nearly square court, the sides of which, hewn out of the rock, exhibit the appearance of four absolutely perpendicular walls, fourteen or fifteen feet high. On one of the sides is a high doorway, above which ornaments in relievo represent palm-trees with their foliage, grapes, and other fruit.

On the left, at the farther end, is a corridor, now so choked up that you cannot get into it without crawling on all-fours. At the extremity of this passage is a very sloping path, which leads to a room, hewn out of the rock itself. In the walls are niches, six feet long and three wide, destined to hold coffins. This room communicates by three doors with seven others, likewise hollowed out of the rock for the same purpose. The coffins which they contained were of stone, and adorned with arabesques.

Some others exist entire, and there are the relics of a few more. The doors of these abodes of death are constructed of the same stone, as well as the hinges. I observed but one that was not broken ; of the others nothing is left but scattered fragments.

It is not easy to assign precisely the period to which these tombs belong ; at any rate, notwithstanding the name that is given them by popular tradition, it is evident that they could not have served for the burial-place of the kings of Judah, since, according to the Bible, those princes were interred in Jerusalem or on Mount Sion. Besides, a glance at these monuments is sufficient to convince us that they are of a less ancient date. Several travellers, on the authority of a passage in Josephus, have concluded that they were constructed by command of Helena, queen of Adiabene, and that this princess was interred in them. Some, grounding their opinion on another passage in Josephus, have conjectured that they were the work of Herod, the tetrarch, who had them hewn for himself and his family. A simple pilgrim, I leave the learned to clear up and resolve the doubts to which the diversity of opinions on this subject has given rise.

Some months ago, a foreigner conceived the design of removing the finest of the coffins from these sepulchral chambers, and conveying it to Jaffa, to be there embarked for Alexandria. The enterprise was the more difficult, inasmuch as it was necessary to communicate the secret to several persons. However, by dint of money and perseverance, he succeeded in abstracting the coffin from the place where it had lain for so many ages ; and he was already upon the road with his prize, borne on the backs of camels, when he received intelligence that the governor of Jerusalem, informed of the bold theft, had issued orders to stop the party. Soon afterwards, the sound of approaching horsemen actually proclaimed the danger which he was incurring ; he had but just time to drop the sarcophagus, by cutting the ropes which bound it upon the camels, and to betake himself to flight under favour of the darkness. I have frequently seen and examined this beautiful coffin, in the middle of the road where it still

lies, without any one daring to touch it. At the time of the coming of the Egyptians, I might perhaps have been able to obtain permission to remove and to send it to Europe; but Lent approached, and other thoughts engaged my mind. Besides, the person who had taken so much pains, and gone to such an expense to possess himself of it, might hope to succeed, by means of proper representations to Ibrahim, in executing his project, and it would have been mortifying to him to find himself anticipated by another.

This sarcophagus is of white marble, adorned with basso-relievos of great beauty, but not exhibiting any figure of men or animals; they represent nothing but foliage, vines, and flowers.

A quarter of a league from the Tombs of the Kings, are situated those of the Judges of Israel. They are of the same kind as the preceding, but less magnificent. The entrance is surmounted by a triglyph, a considerable but tasteless work, placed in a spacious square hall, which serves as a communication to an infinity of chambers; in the walls of which are hewn various niches, one above another, all destined, like those already described, for the reception of coffins.

There is nothing to justify the appellation by which these tombs are known, and all that is circulated on this subject appears to me to be wholly destitute of foundation.

One thing to be remarked is, that the great number of these sepulchres, constructed in one spot, evidently shows that they were not the property of a single family. In going through them, one is never tired of admiring the magnitude of the work, and one is astonished that the mallet and the chisel could have sufficed for forming such excavations in the hardest rocks.

Adieu !

LETTER XXVI.

Abode in the Holy Sepulchre during the three days preceding Ash-Wednesday.

Jerusalem, March 10, 1832.

ON the approach of Lent, I intended at first to shut myself up, during the whole time that it lasted, in the church of the Holy Sepulchre ; but I should have been obliged to suspend my excursions about Jerusalem, at the risk of not being able to resume them afterwards ; I should have been obliged to do too much violence to the most favourite of the habits which I have here contracted, that of regularly visiting the places which call to my remembrance the most painful circumstances of my Saviour's passion. I had, besides, a motive which, though of secondary interest, was not without importance in my estimation. Several Arab workmen are at this moment engaged in making for me various objects of piety that I wish to carry with me to Europe ; objects whose value is daily rising, in proportion as the concourse of pilgrims of different nations increases, and as the orders from Spain, Portugal, and Italy, are becoming more numerous. I was anxious to watch the work, to hasten it, to see that it was properly executed, and that it experienced no interruption. These considerations decided me to change the plan which I had formed. I shall visit the Holy Sepulchre every day that it shall be open in Lent ; but I shall not shut myself up in it till the last fortnight, and I shall leave it at Easter. I have determined at any rate to pass there, in absolute seclusion, the last days of that season which the world calls the Carnival ; that is to say, the three days preceding Ash-Wednesday ; and I shall therefore go in on Saturday.

In these days of riot, when worldlings seem to know no other temples than assembly-rooms and theatres, to have no other deities than pleasure and licentiousness, I felt a powerful impulse to ascend Calvary ; to make penitential atonement for the vices of sinners, and particularly for the part which formerly I had, alas ! myself the misfortune to take in these criminal gratifications. It was for

me a precious occasion for testifying my regret, my repentance, and for deriving from deep meditation those sentiments which I owe to the infinite mercy that has snatched me from the abyss. Oh ! how delightful, my dear friend, how delightful have been the moments that I have passed at the tomb of my Saviour ! How delightful in particular have been the hours of night and silence ! how different from those when, intoxicated by an insensate joy, amidst dancing and festivity, the worldlings, forgetful of their salvation, forgetful of Him who has redeemed them, sacrifice their rest, destroy their health, and ruin their souls !

Kneeling, prostrate, on the stone where lay the sacred body of Jesus, I called to mind all that this Saviour, so tender, so merciful, so kind, so generous, had done for me ; I followed him in thought through all the moments of that life of poverty, toil, and suffering, to which he doomed himself, from his birth in the humble manger, in which I had lately worshipped him, to that cross on which he was pleased to consummate his sacrifice of atonement for our sins, to that sepulchre in which he remained three days under the empire of death. Never had I so clearly perceived, so strongly felt, that excessive love with which he loved the world, and that excessive ingratitude with which the world rejected him ; and from the bottom of my soul I implored pardon for that ungrateful world, and for myself, who have participated in its aberrations.

One thought in particular engaged my mind. Alone, in the silence of night, in presence of that tomb, I felt happy, happy from a kind of happiness that no other expression can render. The love of Jesus for me spoke not less strongly to my heart than if the sepulchre, opening of itself, had shown him to me in the state to which he had been reduced by the torments and death over which he has triumphed. I beheld that sacred head, that brow, torn by the thorns, that blood-stained hair, those pierced hands what do I say ? I beheld him living, victorious ; I felt myself clasped, as it were, in his arms ; I felt with rapture how benevolent he is to those who are willing to serve him, who are willing to

be entirely his ; and at the same time an inward voice called to me : What hast thou done to deserve the favour of being this day separated from the wretched creatures, who, at the moment when such pure felicity floods thy heart, are indulging in vain pleasures, in false joys, and demanding from them certain transient gratifications, which must terminate in remorse, lassitude, disgust? . . . And, in the transports of a gratitude which farther heightened the sense of my unworthiness, I could not be sufficiently thankful to heaven for having granted to the repentance of a sinner a boon that would have been the worthy reward of a saint.

LETTER XXVII.

Site of the ancient Temple erected by Solomon—Mosque of Omar.

Jerusalem, March 14th, 1832.

LAST Wednesday, my dear friend, I quitted the church of the Holy Sepulchre. Before I went into it, I had desired my dragoman to seek out a place where it would be easy for me to examine closely the site of the ancient temple erected by Solomon. I had already taken occasion to view it from Pilate's palace, now the residence of the governor ; and still better, by the aid of a telescope, from the Mount of Olives, one of the most convenient points for examining it thoroughly. Still I was not satisfied : I wished to get closer to it, to seize not only its details, but to embrace in the same view, if possible, the surrounding buildings and the mosque of Omar, which likewise deserve the notice of travellers in the Holy Land. This was not an easy matter. A strict prohibition forbids Christians to enter it : any one caught in the mosque, or even in the place leading to it, would incur the penalty of death, which he would have no means of escaping but by an infamous apostacy. On this point, perhaps more than on any other, the Turks

carry their fanaticism to the last extreme. The Sultan himself cannot grant permission, or, if he does, his Jerusalem subjects conceive that they have a right to pay no regard to it. It is related that a foreigner one day called upon the governor, and, firman in hand, applied to see the mosque. "Thy firman," said the governor, in a passion, "purports that thou shalt be admitted into the mosque ; thou mayst go in ; but, take notice, that it says nothing about letting thee come out again." The foreigner deemed it prudent to relinquish his intention. Sir Sidney Smith, who, by the defence of Acre, had gained high consideration throughout the whole country, took some steps with the same view, but all to no purpose. It is said, however, that two or three Christians have succeeded by means of a disguise in eluding Musulman vigilance, as I shall presently have occasion to relate to you.

My dragoman was not long before he informed me that my commission was executed. He had spoken to a Turk, whose house was nearer to the mosque than any of the surrounding buildings ; its windows overlooked the place itself, and he had obtained permission for me, in my pretended quality of physician, to go and gratify my curiosity behind the blinds of one of his apartments.

I went thither at ten in the morning. The Turk, having made his women withdraw, ushered me into the room with a sort of mystery. The house, though in a slovenly state, appeared handsome. It needed some repairs which time had rendered necessary, but which, as far as I could perceive, were never thought of. The Turks—I am frequently obliged to repeat it—are fond of ruins. A broken column, pilasters cloven or that have tumbled down, are never without some charm for them. This house had originally belonged to the Templars, who had possessed on the same spot several others that were still handsomer.

After the first compliments, I went towards the window to make my observations. The Turk did not lose sight of me for a moment ; he kept constantly beside me and my dragoman, and, whenever he saw any of his people crossing the place, he warned me to step aside.

Once, in particular, when he was particularly urgent for me to step back, he exclaimed, in a tone of alarm : "There is the Capidgi-verde ! I am afraid that he has seen you !" Notwithstanding the air of sincerity with which he expressed his apprehensions, I shrewdly suspected that it was but a clever trick to make me think more highly of the complaisance which he showed me ; I had not passed the prescribed bounds, and I do not think that he ran the least risk of being punished, even if I had been discovered.

The platform on which the Temple was built was an area of six hundred square cubits, or about twenty-five thousand feet. Towards the city it is bordered by a series of buildings, among which are distinguished the governor's palace, formerly the palace of Pilate, and the house of the *cadi*, once that of the patriarch. On the opposite side, it is bounded by the ramparts, which it overlooks, and beyond which the view extends over the valleys of Siloa and Jehoshaphat. In the centre stands the mosque of Omar ; at the farther extremity is another mosque, of a reddish colour and much smaller. It was formerly a church, by the name of the Mother of God. It was built on part of the site of the Temple, where, it is said, the Virgin passed ten years of her life.

There is not a spot on the face of the earth that calls forth recollections so grand, so august, as that which was before my eyes. Here stood the richest, the most magnificent temple that ever man reared to the glory of the Most High. Solomon laid its foundations in the year of the world 2992, finished it in the year 3000, and solemnly dedicated it in the following year. The first book of Kings, the second of Chronicles, Ezekiel, and Josephus the historian, will give you particulars concerning the construction and the riches of this edifice, which I cannot introduce here on account of their length.

In the year of the world 3416, this famous temple was plundered and consigned to the flames by Nabuzardan, commander of the armies of Nebuchadnezzar, king of Assyria : nothing was left of it but ashes.

Fifty-two years afterwards, Zerubbabel and Joshua, or Jesus, son of Josebeck, high priest of the Jews, obtained

permission from Cyrus to rebuild it on the same spot, and they immediately commenced the work : but their operations had afterwards to encounter numerous obstacles, either on the part of the prince by whom they had at first been favoured, or from his successor, so that they could not be finished till the year 3488, the sixth of the reign of Darius, when the dedication took place. Though prodigious sums had been expended in the rebuilding, and all resources had been exhausted in the embellishments, the aged men, who recollected the old edifice and compared it with the new one, could never cease deploring its destruction.

In the year of the world 3986, Herod the Great proposed to the Jews to demolish the then existing temple, and promised to build another, surpassing in extent and magnificence that of Solomon, the constant object of the regret of the nation. The people, surprised, at first showed some reluctance to consent, fearing lest they should be without temple and without altar ; but Herod pacified them by declaring that he would not pull down the edifice where they assembled to worship the Lord, till all the materials requisite for the execution of his plan should be provided. He commenced the work in the following year, and devoted to it immense treasures. Ten thousand labourers were employed in cutting rocks, filling precipices, or erecting the buildings. The work was finished about the middle of the tenth year ; the dedication took place in the year 3996, on the anniversary of the accession of that prince to the throne. It subsisted only seventy-seven years.

This was the Temple, the destruction of which was foretold by Christ ; and concerning which, Titus said to the deputies of the nations which sent him congratulations and crowns : " I am but an instrument of divine vengeance."

In 638, Jerusalem, after sustaining a siege of two years, was forced to offer to capitulate. Omar granted it terms ; then affecting sentiments of the deepest devotion, he entered the city clad in a coarse garment of camel's hair, proceeded to the court of Solomon's temple, caused the filth to be cleared away from it by his soldiers, to whom

he himself set the example, and publicly promised to build a mosque there for those of his own faith.

In a few years the work was completed: the mosque was called Gament-al-Sakra, from the name of the rock, where it was asserted, God had spoken to Jacob. At the time when the city was taken by the crusaders, a great number of Mussulmans sought refuge there. Most of them were slaughtered, either within or without this temple, which was afterwards converted into a church, and used for the Catholic worship, till the period of Saladin's triumphs over the Christians.

The mosque of Omar is built upon a platform, raised about six feet above the level of the place; it is a quadrangle, each side of which is about two hundred paces in length. At each of the four cardinal points there is a flight of eight marble steps, by which you ascend to it.

The building is an octagon, surmounted by a dome, above which is a lantern of the same form, adorned with stained glass of different colours. The walls, lined with small squares of marble or painted porcelain, exhibit a sort of mosaic work, bordered by foliage of whimsical design, in which are framed, as it were, the most remarkable passages of the Koran, inscribed in letters of gold.

Close to it is the reservoir at which the Turks perform their ablutions before they go to prayers.

Owing to the distance at which the observer is placed, even in the position which I occupied, the proportions of the building cannot be calculated with any precision. If we may rely on the writers who appear to have been best informed on the subject, it is about two hundred and fifty-six feet in circumference and one hundred and twenty in height.

My Turk assured me, with the greatest seriousness, that within it is to be seen a stone of enormous size, suspended in the air, and upheld in it as by a miracle. My dragoman, who is neither a dolt nor over-credulous, affirmed the same thing; and, what is still more extraordinary, a Catholic mason, who had accompanied us, told me the same story. All three pitied my unbelief, and were vexed to hear me treat their account as a silly story.

The mason passes in Jerusalem for an excellent man. Twenty times have I questioned him concerning this prodigy, and twenty times he has repeated his first assertion. He insists that he is more certain of the truth of what he states, because he has been employed for some months in the repair of the interior : "and I had plenty of time," he gravely adds, "to look at and to examine this stone, which is of a green colour."

I afterwards questioned several persons of Jerusalem, who seemed to me not deficient in sense. What was my surprise to find them offended at my obstinate unbelief ! If there can be any truth in the story, which I still cannot help thinking evidently fabulous, the stone in question is no doubt actually to be seen at the top of the mosque, where it has been so skilfully fixed, that the observer who looks at it from below is the dupe of an illusion, and persuades himself that it touches nothing.

Few travellers, probably, have visited Jerusalem without feeling a strong desire to enter this mosque and to convince themselves with their own eyes of the truth or falsehood of all that is related concerning it. In general they have been withheld, some by apprehension of the personal danger which they should incur, others by the fear of compromising those from whom they were receiving hospitality, or even all the Catholics dwelling in Jerusalem. Mention is nevertheless made of several persons, who, disguised as Arabs, found means to gratify their curiosity : among others are mentioned a Spaniard, Don Domingo Badia y Leblich, who travelled under the name of Ali Bey el Abassi, and Burckhardt, who assumed the appellation of Sheik Ibrahim : both passed for Mahometans, and both spoke Arabic so fluently that they might well be mistaken for natives of the country.

In 1818 Madame Belzoni successfully employed the same stratagem. In the dress of a Turkish woman, she penetrated without obstacle into the mosque. She there saw a great number of pillars, mostly of granite, the capitals of which appeared to be of coarse workmanship, like all the works of Mahometan architecture. Having entered a kind of closet, lighted by a large window, she

there found a Catholic mason, who told her that this was the place where the aged Simeon and Anna, holding in their arms the infant Jesus, had prophesied. The mason afterwards pointed out to her an aperture in the wall, looking towards Siloa, and assured her that originally there was a door there by which Christ entered the Temple. He would have shown her many other things not less interesting, and which he regarded as sacred ; but the lady, not understanding Arabic, and very little of Italian, so that she could scarcely comprehend what he said to her ; tormented, moreover, by the very reasonable apprehension of being surprised in such a place, thanked him, and hastened out of it.

Before we retired, my dragoman made me remark around the Place, and particularly at the points nearest to us, fragments of porticoes, columns, and arcades, from which numerous lamps were suspended ; and he pointed out one as being the very site of "the gate of the Temple which is called Beautiful," where sat the beggar, lame from his birth, whom the apostle Peter cured in the name of Jesus of Nazareth.

My Turk was more anxious to relate to me Mussulman traditions. "Do you see," said he, pointing to a kind of chapel on the right, "do you see that little building?—it contains a stone, which is there by a miracle." According to him, this stone was formerly carried away by the Greeks, but, no sooner was it out of Jerusalem, than it had the complaisance to return of itself to the place which it now occupies. Then directing my attention to another edifice, backed against a wall, which bounds the Place towards the valley of Jehoshaphat, "It was there," said he, "on that very spot, that the great Solomon used to sit when superintending the works of the Temple." He would have told me many other fine things, could I but have shown ever so little patience and discretion. I thanked him for his civility and retired, admiring in him a politeness to which the Turks had not yet accustomed me.

LETTER XXVIII.

Excursion to St. Saba—Camp of Bedouins; Dearth prevailing in it—View of the Monastery of St. Saba—Greek Monks—Apartments—Dinner—Superb Palm-tree—Pilgrims—Night passed at St. Saba—Brook Cedron—The Pilgrims laid under contribution by the Arabs.

Jerusalem, March 17th, 1832.

I WAS only waiting, my dear friend, for a favourable occasion to visit the monastery of St. Saba; such a one occurred last week, and I hastened to avail myself of it. As the roads are unsafe, and it would have been the height of imprudence to venture thither otherwise than in caravan, I requested the prior of the monastery, who habitually resides here, to have the goodness to inform me when one should be going. This monk, whose manners are most cordial, and who speaks Italian tolerably, desired me the very next day to hold myself in readiness for the 15th. On the day mentioned, at eight in the morning, I went to him, and we set out with a few Arabs. He had taken care to send on before us the Greek pilgrims, about a hundred in number, accompanied by a janissary, with orders to wait for us at the well of Nehemiah.

On reaching the foot of Mount Sion, opposite to the Aeldama, we saw a messenger advancing towards us in breathless haste: he accosted the prior and delivered a letter to him. The prior opened the despatch, and had scarcely read a few lines before he turned pale with pain and surprise. At first, he said nothing about its contents; and I, for my part, thought it right to respect his silence. But presently the words, *banditti*, robbers, escaped almost involuntarily from his lips; then raising his hand to his forehead, "It is incredible!" said he, talking to himself; "it is incredible!—what!—in spite of three iron doors!—The robbers! the robbers!" I deemed myself sufficiently authorized by this soliloquy to inquire the cause of his affliction. "Alas!" he replied, heaving a deep sigh, "alas! the monastery to which we

are going has just been plundered by the Arabs. Instead of attacking the three iron doors, which defend the entrance, and behind which we fancied ourselves safe, they have made a hole in the wall, penetrated into the interior, carried off all the provisions, and ill-used our brethren before they withdrew. What adds to my grief, and renders it more bitter," continued he, "is the thought that, in a house so pillaged, it will be impossible for us to receive you so well as you deserve. I have given orders that at least the most necessary articles be brought to us with all speed from Jerusalem."—I assured the good prior that, a monk like himself, and belonging to a very rigid order, I was accustomed to privations, and that my only grief was the cruel trial which himself and his community had to suffer.

We soon overtook our pilgrims, some on horseback, others on foot, but collected close together, and ready to defend themselves in case of attack. We pursued our route along with them, proceeding between hills without trees, without shade, without verdure, the dreary aspect of which prepared us for that of St. Saba, still more dreary.

Two leagues from Jerusalem, we came to a camp of Bedouins, and a league farther to another. The first consisted of fifteen tents, the second of about twenty, all of a black stuff woven from camel's hair. The men appeared extremely spare, but well made, and so tanned that we might have taken them for Ethiopians. Camels, goats, asses, dogs, women, children, were all huddled together: on our approach the men rose, the women covered themselves, the children began to cry, and the dogs to bark; our unexpected presence, and especially our number, had filled them with real alarm.

A few paces from the camp, I perceived some poor women, hard at work, digging up roots. "It is for the purpose of feeding upon them," said the good prior, "the famine which at this moment afflicts the country reduces them to this extremity. The convent exhausts itself in relieving them; it is making enormous sacrifices; every other day it gives at least a small loaf to each man, and never sends away a creature that comes without some

donation ; and yet," added he, "the scoundrels ! they make holes in the walls to get in and plunder us !—the wretches ! . . . And we have three iron doors, reverend father, three iron doors, and yet are not safe ! . . . Before that cursed siege of Acre they durst not have done so. Now they dare do anything ; nobody punishes them !"

About a league and a half beyond the second camp of the Bedouins, we suddenly descried before us the points of two lofty towers apparently shooting out of the abyss : they were those of St. Saba. I do not think it possible for recluses to settle on a more arid, a more frightfully desert spot, than this. There is no exaggeration in the most repulsive pictures that travellers have drawn to portray its horror. Nowhere is anything to be seen but dust and rocks ; and it is on the steep and almost perpendicular side of these rocks, four hundred feet above the level of the brook Cedron, the bed of which is discovered at the bottom of the ravine, that the first terrace, or rather, if I may be allowed the expression, the basement of the monastery is constructed. The rest of the buildings, backed against the hill, rise in the rear, stage above stage, to the topmost, the base of the part of the building which overlooks all the rest, and which is itself overlooked by the towers, whose summits first met our view.

On the opposite side, at a depth that affrights the eye when it would attempt to measure it, you perceive a great number of grottoes, the range of which extends for several leagues. The inequality, the steepness of the rocks, their barrenness, must, one would think, have concurred to forbid all access to them ; and yet there is not one that has not been inhabited by some of the pious recluses, who have filled the world with the fame of their austerities and their virtues. Long before the time of St. Saba, they were peopled by cenobites and anchorets, and their number increased considerably under that illustrious saint. Prayer, meditation, the praises of the Lord, and the labour of their hands, occupied their days and were continued amid the silence of night.

In the year 1100, the infidels made a dreadful slaughter

of these recluses, four or five hundred of whose heads were shown to me preserved as relics. Now these grottoes have no other inhabitants than blue pigeons, to which they serve for retreats, and which are fond of building their nests in them.

There are few pictures so interesting to Christian piety as that which St. Ephraim has left us of the anchorets, whose penitent and holy life has given celebrity to these deserts.

“The caverns and the rocks,” says he, “are their abodes ; they shut themselves up in the mountains, as behind walls and inaccessible ramparts. The ground is their table ; the wild herbs which it produces are their ordinary food, and the water flowing in the brooks, or gushing from the clefts or crannies of the rocks, is their only beverage. They make a church of every place to which they come ; their prayers are incessant, and they pass the livelong day in that holy exercise ; the praises of the Lord are their sacrifices, which they offer to him in the recesses of their caverns. They are themselves both priests and victims ; they cure our complaints by the efficacy of their prayers. These holy intercessors are always present before God, and never separate from him. They know not what it is to aspire to honours, to raise themselves to the first ranks ; their low estate is all their glory ; and by means of this they strive to render themselves faithful imitators of him who being rich, out of love to us made himself poor. They allow themselves no rest in this world, because they are full of spiritual consolations ; they wander about in the deserts, and live with the wild beasts which they there meet with ; they are on the tops of the hills like burning torches, giving light to those who come to seek them from the impulse of a sincere piety. They are in the solitudes like walls which cannot be shaken, and this it is that causes them to retain there a solid and constant peace ; they rest upon the hills live doves, and they perch like eagles on the tops of the most elevated rocks. If they are ever weary, in consequence of their toils, it is a sort of pleasure to them to take a little repose on the ground ; but presently they awake, and with fresh fervour their voices, like clanging

trumpets, sound forth on all sides the praises of God. Christ, who never forsakes them, and the hosts of his angels which incessantly surround them, defend them against the attacks of their enemies. If they kneel upon the ground, it is presently steeped with their tears ; and when their prayers are finished, God himself does not disdain to serve his servants.

“ Their death is neither less happy nor less admirable than their life : they take no care to construct themselves tombs, for they are crucified to the world, and the vehemence of the love which unites them to Jesus Christ has already given them their death-blow. Frequently, the very spot where they stopped to hold their fasts is that of their sepulchre. Several of them have sunk into a sweet and quiet sleep, in the force and fervour of their prayers. Others, fixed as it were on the points of sharp rocks, have voluntarily resigned their souls into the hands of God. There have been some, who, wandering about with their usual simplicity, died in the mountains, which have served them for a sepulchre ; some, knowing that the moment of their deliverance had arrived, confirmed in the grace of Jesus Christ, after providing themselves with the sign of the cross, have laid themselves down in their graves. Others have fallen asleep in the Lord, while eating the herbs prepared for them by his providence. Some there have been who, while singing the praises of the Lord, have expired in a moment with the effort, death alone terminating their prayers and stopping their mouths. Now, these incomparable men are awaiting the trump of the archangel, and the arrival of that moment when the earth shall give up, at the command of God, the bodies committed to it ; when they shall live and flourish anew, like lilies in ineffable whiteness, brightness, and beauty ; when Jesus Christ shall crown with his hand, and reward with a happy eternity the hardships which they have endured for his service and glory.”

The monastery of St. Saba is now inhabited by monks of the Greek ritual : their life is as austere as that of La Trappe, with the exception of oil, which we are not allowed to use ; but their bread is far inferior to our's. Notwithstanding the severity of their fasts and their peni-

tence, they enjoy excellent health, and live to a great age : I have seen one of a hundred-and-one years, and who was not yet *hors de combat*.

I was received by the community with all sorts of attentions. The apartment allotted to me is a very clean room, surrounded with very elegant divans. On the wall hung a picture of the Virgin, before which a lamp was burning. I would fain have solicited the favour of being put into a simple cell ; but I felt that my request would not be granted, and I spoke of nothing but my gratitude.

My dinner, decently served up on a tray, was soon brought to me : it consisted of olives, fishes' roes, and a kind of salad, just brought from Jerusalem. I had reluctantly suffered myself to be installed in my little saloon ; I could not resolve to take my meat seated on a divan—I, a monk of La Trappe, and in the monastery at St. Saba, a few paces from some hundred heads of martyrs ! To the great surprise of the brethren, I therefore carried my tray to the grotto of St. Saba, hewn out of the rock not far from the convent ; and there, seated on the stone on which he formerly sat, having another stone for my table, I enjoyed one of the happy dinners similar to those of which I have already sometimes made mention.

In the afternoon, I went to see the interior of the house, in all its details. I tarried a few moments in the chapel, in which is interred St. John of Damascus.

On quitting it to proceed to the towers, I was struck to find on the terrace a superb palm-tree, whose fresh foliage of a beautiful green formed the most pleasing contrast with the uniformly yellow or grayish tint of this barren desert. I could not tire of looking at it : the traveller who meets with an oasis amidst the burning deserts of Libya does not experience a more soothing or a more delightful impression.

In one of the towers I found a great quantity of small and very black loaves. The famished Arabs come and knock at the door, and, from a height of eighty feet, the fathers let down to them by a cord this food, which they devour several times with their eyes before it reaches them. Probably the robbers could not get to this

place on the day when they plundered the convent. Perhaps, too, the prey appearing to them to be of too little value, they confined themselves to flour and rice. I took with me one of these loaves, which I cannot compare to anything but to those which are made in Europe for dogs. Two days afterwards, I ate it, and, what is extraordinary, I thought it good : it did me no harm.

On descending, I went to see the Greek pilgrims, with whom I had come, at dinner. There were upwards of a hundred, most of them seamen, from the Archipelago. There were no women among them : they cannot, upon any pretext whatever, be admitted into the monastery.

The new guests were supplied with lentil soup, onions, fishes' roes, afterwards coffee, an article of prime necessity in the Levant, and lastly, brandy. The prior dined with them, and all ate in silence.

Towards evening, more provisions came from Jerusalem. They seemed to me less necessary than I had at first thought them.

What I saw led me to believe that the good prior had somewhat exaggerated the mischief done by the Arabs, or that they had perhaps not been able to carry away all that they would fain have done.

Meanwhile, night had fallen, and the monks were sleeping soundly till the hour for singing the praise of God should arrive. For my part, stretched on my divan, I should have striven in vain to get a few moments' sleep : all that the day had shown me—that dreary and wild nature ; that desolate soil : those rugged mountains stricken with sterility ; those caverns ; those yawning rocks ; those deserted and silent grottoes ; those deep abysses ; that stream, rolling along scarcely water sufficient to cover the rocks over which it flows ; that monastery ; those heads of martyrs, preserved there to attest that the religion of Christ is not afraid of executioners ; those monks, maintaining their post and perpetuating themselves under the protection of heaven, amidst the most inveterate enemies of the cross ; the remembrance of so many heroes of penitence, who sacrificed themselves on the same spot, and bequeathed their examples to

their successors ; that horrible famine among the Arabs ; that immense charity of the good fathers—all these images, all these thoughts, succeeded one another in my mind, and, if I may be allowed the expression, urged one another forward with such precipitation, that, for a long time, it was not able to tarry at the feeling which each of them excited.

And when this rapid movement had somewhat slackened, and it was possible for me to meditate, then, thinking of that which of all things on earth is dearest to my heart, "What is become," said I, "what is become of the house, where, admitted to penitence, I, too, enjoyed happiness, a still purer happiness than that enjoyed in their cells by the good fathers of St. Saba, unfortunately, alas ! cut off from unity ! Where is that couch which the world deems so hard, and upon which I have slept more sweetly than ever I did in my life ? Who would have imagined that men who expect felicity only from indulgence, from gold, from power, from voluptuousness, should take upon them the task of depriving other men of the felicity of lying hard, of cultivating the ground with the sweat of their brow, of nourishing their bodies with a little bread, or pulse moistened with a few drops of water !" And my eyes filled with tears, and sighs burst from my oppressed bosom, and I found myself on the point of murmuring.

But, amid these tears and these lamentations, wrung from me by the pain of being separated from an order to which I was bound by my love still more than by my vows, all at once an inward voice stopped me and softly asked if, among all the rules to which I had bound myself by my vows, the holy will of God is not the first and the most sacred ; if this holy will of God is not the characteristic sign of the faithful Trappist !

And my tears and my sighs ceased ; and, with a heart subdued by an ineffable charm to the will of my Jesus, I began to comprehend that there is more mercy, more kindness than tongue can express, in his severest dispensations towards those who love him ; I comprehended how blind, how unjust one must be, not to look beyond human injustice, in order to consider both the justice of

Him who makes it subservient to his purposes, and the justice of the things which he does.

And methought at that moment my blessed Saviour addressed me in particular, and said to me: "If I had not permitted that which it has pleased my wisdom to permit, shouldst thou ever have had the happiness to come and visit me, and to worship me on the very spot where I was born, where I suffered, where I died for thee? to touch with thy hands and thy lips both the stone of my manger and the stone of my tomb, which my body has touched? to see, to contemplate closely, to what a degree I abased myself to save thee, to save sinners? And doth not my grace tell thee that thou wilt carry back with thee more faith, more hope, more love?"

And fresh tears, different from the former, tears this time of peace and charity, trickled from my eyes, and I blessed the Lord; and, till the last moment of my life, I shall treasure the remembrance of the happy night spent at St. Saba.

At eight in the morning, I went down to the brook Cedron, to see, at the extremity of a cavern, a spring which is named after the saint; and which, according to a very ancient tradition, God granted in compliance with his prayer. This spring, I was assured, has never been dry since that time; and hither it is that the pilgrims usually come for water.

I was preparing to return to Jerusalem, when lamentable cries, which we heard outside the monastery, and the affrighted looks of the good monks, from whom I was about to part, made me apprehend, for a moment, that some new misfortune had happened.

A very numerous body of Arabs had possessed themselves of all the outlets, and would not suffer one of our pilgrims to go out till he had given them a *bakschisch*. I, nevertheless, mounted my horse. The moment I appeared, the yells were redoubled, and the mob thronged around me. However, it was by no means my intention, still less was it consistent with my character, to comply with their requisition. I desired the janissary, who had accompanied the pilgrims, to declare to the Arabs that I was a Frank, a subject of the mighty emperor of Austria,

and that I would not degrade myself by paying them the very smallest piece of money, which they had no right to demand.

My resolute air overawed them. While the janissary and the warden, both greatly embarrassed, interpreted my words to them, I passed through their midst, without their daring to seize the bridle and to stop me.

The prior hastened to join me, and to express the pain he felt at what had just happened. He assured me that, hitherto, the Arabs had never laid the pilgrims under contribution when leaving St. Saba, and charitably placed the violence of those unfortunate creatures to the account of the famine. I left him; full of gratitude for the kind hospitality which I had received at his hands.

The conduct of the Arabs was not calculated to excite in the pilgrims a feeling of security. Most of them drew back, expecting fresh extortions; some appeared to be afraid lest they should not get off by merely suffering in their purse. This was an additional motive for us to observe the same order, the same precautions, on our return, as at our departure; at least, till we should be beyond the mountains, amidst which, attacks or ambushes were most to be feared. Four hours afterwards, we had all entered the Holy City without molestation. Farewell!

LETTER XXIX.

Road to Bethany—Ground where grew the Fig-tree struck with barrenness—Bethany—Sepulchre of Lazarus—House of Martha and Mary—Stone, on which Christ is said to have rested himself—Bethphage—Place where Judas hanged himself—Imprudence.

Jerusalem, March 20, 1832.

EARLY yesterday morning, my dear Charles, I was with my dragoman on the road to Bethany. As we approached the Mount of Olives, we met some women going to Jerusalem, with goats' milk, to sell. They offered me some; but I did not take any: I have sometimes tasted that milk, which I dislike much. The Turks are very fond of it, and use it, almost habitually, at their meals.

Having proceeded about half a league, we halted for a few minutes before the ground, where, according to tradition, grew the fig-tree which was struck with barrenness by Jesus Christ.

"And on the morrow, when they were come from Bethany," says St. Mark, (xi. 12 et seq.) "he was hungry. And seeing a fig-tree afar off having leaves, he came, if haply he might find anything thereon: and when he came to it, he found nothing but leaves, for the time of figs was not yet. And Jesus answered and said unto it, No man eat fruit of thee hereafter for ever."

We proceeded a few paces farther, and arrived at Bethany. This was once a small town, belonging to the tribe of Benjamin. In the early ages of the Church, it was frequently visited by the Christians. It is now but a mean village, inhabited by a few Turkish families. Its name signifies, according to some, house of obedience, or of affliction; according to others, house of gratification. The Turks call it, at the present day, Lazari, in memory of Lazarus, for whom they testify great veneration.

The houses are very low and flat-roofed, like all those in Judea. The first thing that struck me, on entering, was to see sheep and goats on several of these platforms;

I had not, as yet, observed anything of the king in the villages of Palestine.

I halted on the right, at the spot where the sepulchre of Lazarus is situated. As you must descend about thirty very dark steps to arrive at this tomb, I had two torches lighted ; then, falling on my knees at the threshold, I read, with deep devotion, the eleventh chapter of the gospel of St. John, which contains the affecting account of the death and resurrection of the friend of Jesus.

“Now a certain man was sick, named Lazarus, of Bethany, the town of Mary and her sister Martha.”

And, when I came to this passage—

“When Jesus saw her (Mary) weeping, and the Jews also weeping which came with her, he groaned in the spirit and was troubled, and he said : Where have ye laid him ? They say unto him, Lord, come and see. Jesus wept. Then said the Jews, Behold how he loved him” —when, I say, I came to this place, I found it impossible to repress the emotions of my heart. It seemed as if the great miracles of that kind, that compassionate, that tender Jesus, were about to be performed before my face ; and my tears trickled down, mingling with those which his ineffable charity caused him to shed, as though I had been one of the happy witnesses who had come with Mary.

And, as if the words, “Come and see,” had been addressed to me, too, I felt impelled, in my turn, to approach the tomb, and to look closely at it, to gather from it the awful and wholesome lessons that are given by death. Then, having come to this remarkable circumstance, recorded by the evangelist :—“And some of them (the Jews) said, Could not this man which opened the eyes of the blind, have caused that even this man should not have died ?”—I could not help sighing, on recognising in it a language, alas ! too common in the world which I have quitted ; that language of human pride, which foolishly deems its paltry wisdom wiser than the divine wisdom !

How, my friend, shall I describe to you the effect produced in me by the all-powerful words which raised Lazarus from his sepulchre, and restored him alive to his disconsolate family !

“He (Jesus) cried with a loud voice : Lazarus, come

forth. And he that was dead came forth bound hand and foot with grave-clothes : and his face was bound about with a napkin. Jesus saith unto them, Loose him and let him go."

Ah ! my dear Charles, know you not that he who writes these lines was another Lazarus, whom the same all-powerful voice had called forth from another tomb ? And could there be a place that more strongly reminded his gratitude of the miracle of mercy by which his bonds were loosed and he was restored to a new life ?

Having finished reading, and passed a few moments in meditation on the grave thoughts to which it gave rise, I began to descend. At the foot of the twenty-fourth step, you come to a sort of vestibule, where stands an altar of stone, at which the Franciscan Fathers perform mass twice a year. You are obliged to stoop in descending the last six steps, after which, you find yourself in a grotto, about twenty feet long and five wide, to the left of which you see a vaulted cell : here it was that Lazarus was deposited, and that he remained four days after he was buried.

The house of Martha and Mary was at a considerable distance from the tomb of their brother. My dragoman conducted me to the spot where it is said to have stood ; I could not discover there any other vestige of a dwelling than a ruined wall.

Thence I went to see the stone, where, according to tradition, Christ rested before he entered Bethany, when Martha, apprized of his coming, went forth to meet him. This stone is about three feet long and two wide ; it is of granite. Around it have been placed stones of less size, which serve to cause it to be remarked. The pilgrims repair to this stone, before which they kneel and pray. To prevent the injuries which their pious thefts might occasion, they are forbidden, upon pain of excommunication, to break off fragments, by means of a hammer or any other implement ; but they are allowed to pick off little bits, if they can, with their nails.

On my return to Jerusalem, I passed through Bethphage, formerly a small village, the fertile fields of which subsisted part of the animals, principally lambs, destined

for sacrifices. A few wretched huts only are left. It was from this place that Jesus sent two of his disciples to a neighbouring village, to fetch the ass on which he rode at the time of his triumphant entry into Jerusalem ; thus fulfilling the prophecy made several centuries before by Zachariah to the Jewish nation : " Tell ye the daughter of Sion, Behold thy king cometh unto thee, meek, and sitting upon an ass," &c.

At some distance from Bethphage, I saw the spot rendered for ever horrible by the death of Judas. The remembrance of this victim of despair, who sold his master for a few pieces of money, which remorse would not allow him to enjoy, produced a most painful impression upon my soul.

The day was dull and gloomy, and served to increase the sadness and the melancholy that oppressed my heart. Seized with an inward shudder, I had scarcely courage and strength to approach this theatre of the divine vengeance ; I seated myself a few paces off, on a detached rock. Assailed by a thousand painful thoughts, I felt a desire to be alone. I ordered my dragoman to return, and continued to meditate. My reflections dwelt with inexpressible horror on the awful fate of those sinners, whom the Scriptures speaks of, and into whose mouths it puts these words of anguish : " Our transgressions and our crimes are upon us ; they dry us up : how can we live ?"—of those great culprits, whom remorse pursues and tortures, and who fancy that they are escaping from it by rushing with blind fury into the presence of divine justice.

And then my soul was led gently back to infinite mercy. Oh ! how kind is that Jesus, who wishes that the most guilty, as well as the most righteous, of his children, shall retain and practise hope ; who, persecuted, betrayed, delivered up to his enemies, still desires to be himself the hope of the persecutors and the traitors ; who declares that he has always his eyes open upon those who hope in him ; that he will be their helper, their protector ; that he will heal them ; that he will save them ; that, in short, the only sin not to be forgiven is, not to apply for

his mercy, or to say with Cain : " My crime is too great for me to obtain pardon."

Meanwhile, night approached : I was afraid that I should not have time to get back to Jerusalem. I had to descend a very steep part of the Mount of Olives ; then to cross the valley of Jehoshaphat ; and afterwards, to ascend the steepest side of the hill on which St. Stephen was stoned.

The Turkish tombs which were before me, and among which, a few moments before, I had perceived some women, were all at once deserted. It came into my mind, that the chiefs of some of the Bedouin tribes, in the vicinity of Jordan, had been summoned to appear that very day before the governor, as being accused of a hostile disposition towards the Egyptians. I was not without apprehension, when at that very moment I discerned, behind heaps of stones, points of lances, which glistened in the twilight ; and presently several Bedouins descended the hill at full trot. They had seen me. I repented, I must confess, having staid there alone. To get out of the scrape, I had no other resource than to put on a bold look : I went straight up to them. The first that I came to stopped before me, eyeing me steadfastly. I saluted him, by laying my hand on my heart, and repeated the same gesture to the others. They passed on without saying a single word, without even asking me for tobacco, a thing which they never forget when they meet a Frank. My dress indicated nothing that could tempt them. An enormous straw hat, a shabby white robe, a black threadbare scapulary, were no doubt thought by them not to bespeak a wealthy pilgrim ; and to this air of poverty I was probably indebted for the favour of returning safe and sound to Jerusalem.

The gates were just going to be shut : a few minutes later and I must have passed the night outside, without a shelter, which, in a country like this, is never without danger.

Farewell, my friend. Unless unforeseen obstacles derange my plans, I shall as soon as possible make an excursion to the Jordan and the Dead Sea, of which my next letter shall give you an account.

LETTER XXX.

Excursion to the Jordan and the Dead Sea—Travelling Companions—Precaution for the Safety of the Caravan—Bedouin Escort—Arabian Horses—Provisions stolen—Jericho—The Aga and his superb Horse—Elisha's Fountain—Mountain where our Saviour passed forty Days in Fasting and Prayer—Ruins of Jericho—The Jordan—The Dead Sea—Salt—Statue of Lot's Wife—Return to Jerusalem—Night spent at the Gate of the City.

Jerusalem, March 28th, 1832.

I HAVE succeeded, my dear friend, in executing the plan which I mentioned to you at the end of my last letter. I have visited the Jordan as well as the Dead Sea, and I hasten to give you the particulars of that excursion, not less interesting than toilsome and perilous.

I was on the point of starting, when the Russian Consul at Jaffa recommended to me two young Frenchmen, who had been travelling for the last two years in Greece and Asia. These gentlemen called to see me; I found them very amiable; we soon got acquainted, and the very same day we agreed to make the trip together.

It was necessary to obtain the permission of the Egyptian governor, who now commands in Jerusalem, and who, by his firmness, has made himself feared by the Arabs. He granted it the more willingly, because Ibrahim, not wholly without uneasiness respecting the ultimate issue of the war, is endeavouring to conciliate more especially the good-will of the Europeans: and his compliance was moreover marked by all the politeness, all the grace, of which a man of his country is susceptible. That our excursion might be performed with the greater safety, he sent for the sheik of the tribe of Bedouins nearest to that part of the Dead Sea which we intended to visit; and, for fear this chief should suspect some ambush, he gave to the messenger a letter explanatory of the motives for which he summoned him to Jerusalem.

At any time, the journey to the Dead Sea is attended with danger, but this danger has been greatly increased since the invasion of the pacha of Egypt. The governor has not troops enough to repress the Arabs, and their depredations are becoming more frequent from day to day.

The sheik arrived on the day after the next, and swore by his head to bring us back safe and sound, on condition of our taking an escort of twenty Bedouins, which he would provide for us. Our departure was fixed for the 24th. Our caravan was to be composed of about thirty persons, namely, the sheik, twenty Bedouins, my two young friends, Messrs. C. and B., an American who joined us, a dragoman, a Greek servant, the janissary of the monastery, a Turkish soldier belonging to the governor, and your humble servant.

Accordingly, on the 22d, at eight in the morning, we set out from Jerusalem, headed by the Turkish soldier, who carried a lance. We were all well mounted, armed cap-a-pie, and determined, in case of our meeting with an enemy, not to submit to be robbed. I had put off my monastic dress, which would have incommoded me too much for defence. Be not surprised, my dear friend, to see a Trappist armed : on this point I had sought to set my conscience at ease. I was assured that it was allowable for me to bear arms, since it was not to go to war that I provided myself with them ; but to save my own life, and the life of my companions, in case of attack. I was sensible, on my return, that this reason was not wholly free from objection. At first, I had not looked at the matter so closely.

We halted for a moment before the residence of the governor, to receive the papers requisite for us, and left the city by the gate of St. Stephen, where some armed Bedouins of our escort were waiting for us. When our baggage-horse, laden with provisions, came up, the Bedouins, hard pressed by famine, especially at this disastrous time, begged earnestly for bread. I was for giving them some ; but it was justly observed that, if we yielded so readily to their solicitations, there would be no order whatever in our meals ; that, on the first

cravings of hunger, our Bedouins would renew their entreaties ; that we had more than thirty mouths to feed ; and that, if we would not run the risk of soon seeing our resources exhausted, we ought to defer this distribution till the hour for diener. These considerations prevailed. We descended the hill where St. Stephen was stoned, crossed the brook Cedron, and passed the garden of Gethsemane ; and, after leaving the Mount of Olives on our left, and traversed the valley of Jehoshaphat, we took the road to Bethany, where we arrived in three-quarters of an hour. Half a league farther, we found our sheik waiting for us, with the rest of his troop. Mounted on a mare of extraordinary beauty, and armed with a lance, he placed himself at our head. All the Bedouins that we met approached him, and gave him their hand ; those of our escort did the same. It seemed to us that this was a mutual sign of recognition, by which each knew whether the other belonged to a friendly or a hostile tribe.

The Bedouins are of middling stature, well made, spare, and indefatigable. Some of them have very fine faces ; all have a characteristic expression in their features ; and they are, in general, dark as Ethiopians. They go barefoot. Most of them wear a long coat, fastened round the waist by a belt. Some of them are wrapped in a sort of white blanket, with coloured stripes, which they arrange according to circumstances : they throw it over the arm in hot weather, over the shoulders when they are cold, and over the head when it rains. On horseback, they are armed with a dagger and a musket, or a lance.

Some of those who formed our escort marched by our side. Most of them kept along the hills and the rocks, that they might be able the more easily to discover any hidden foe, and give notice of the approach of Arabs, who might be coming to surprise us : these were our scouts.

As for our sheik, in order to display his forecast, his cleverness, and, more especially, the spirit of his mare, he would sometimes dash away from us at full gallop, in spite of the inequalities of a stony and difficult road, and

soon be out of our sight ; but presently we perceived him on the top of a mountain, which we should have thought it impossible for him to reach. Then, stopping for a moment to look about him, he would clear, with the rapidity of lightning, the space by which we were separated, and come back and rejoin us.

None of the Arabian horses that I have seen in Europe can be compared to the Arab steed, such as he is in the country where he is bred : there it is that he appears in all his beauty, all his vigour. The mare of the Arab is his wealth ; she feeds him in emergency, and saves his head, when the hand of the oppressor would strike it off. How beautiful, how true, is the picture which Job has drawn of the horse !

“Hast thou given the horse strength ? hast thou clothed his neck with thunder ? Canst thou make him afraid as a grasshopper ? The glory of his nostrils is terrible. He paweth in the valley, and rejoiceth in his strength : he goes on to meet the armed men. He mocketh at fear and is not affrighted ; neither turneth he back from the sword. The quiver rattleth against him, the glittering spear and the shield. He swalloweth the ground with fierceness and rage ; neither believeth he that it is the sound of the trumpet. He smelleth the battle afar off, the thunder of the captains and the shouting.”

In Arabia there are but two breeds of horses : the *kadichi*, which are the common sort ; and the *cochlani*, a noble breed, generally supposed to have come originally from the stables of Solomon. The utmost care is taken to keep this breed pure. The *cochlani* will pass whole days without food ; he will endure unheard-of fatigues, and fears no danger : he is absolutely the horse of Job.

The Arabs make it a point of great importance to preserve the pedigree of their horses. To this end they keep regular registers : the excellent and pure blood of a horse reflects honour upon his owner. M. Rousseau has given a copy of one of these pedigrees, which is so curious that I cannot refrain from quoting at least a part of it.

“In the name of God, clement and merciful, from

whom we expect all help and assistance, the Prophet has said : My people shall never join to strengthen error. The object of this paper is as follows :—

“We, the undersigned, declare before the supreme God, certify, and attest, swearing by our fate, our fortune, and our writings, that the bay mare, marked (with such or such marks), is descended from noble progenitors, both on the side of the dam and of the sire, for three direct and successive generations ; that she possesses all the qualities of those mares spoken of by the Prophet, when he says : Their bellies shall be treasuries and their backs seats of honour. Supported by the testimony of our predecessors, we attest, &c.

“God is the best of witnesses.”

We had not been travelling an hour before we perceived that the Arab, who had charge of the horse laden with the provisions, was robbing us unmercifully: whatever he could lay hands on was transferred to his mouth or his pockets. An Arab delights in thieving. We placed him in the centre, and directed that he should be closely watched: for it would be impossible for us to procure victuals and especially bread during our journey.

Ever since our departure from Jerusalem, we had marched continually between sterile, grayish, treeless, shadeless hills; at the foot of some of them we merely remarked here and there a patch covered with poppies and yellowish daisies. I frequently saw our Arabs, as they passed near bushes, pull up some roots and greedily devour them. This wrung my heart; I turned away my face, and thought of those sumptuous banquets which I used to give in other days of painful memory—banquets, the value of which would have been a fortune to so many wretched creatures.

The farther we advanced, the worse the roads became: nothing but stones, deep ditches to cross, parched and dreary mountains, rocks on either hand, frightful abysses, into which one false step of our horses would have plunged us. The heat was so intense, that in an hour's time M. C—— was struck by a *coup de soleil*. We moved on in profound silence. Nought was to be heard save the prayers of the sheik, chanting, in a monotonous

tone, verses of the Koran. Some very pretty black and white birds flitted before us, and enormous eagles hovered over the hills by which we were environed. At length, after a march of six leagues, we perceived from the top of a mountain the plain of Jericho, where we arrived in another hour. If ever, in my travels, my imagination, picturing to itself the situation or appearance of places, has found its preconceived notions egregiously erroneous, it was at the sight of the present Jericho.

Ancient Jericho, built by the Jebusites, was the first Canaanitish town taken by the Israelites under the conduct of Joshua. The gold, the silver, and the copper were consecrated to the Lord, after which the place was burned. Men and cattle were all put to death : not a creature was spared, excepting the family of Rahab, in recompense for the reception which she had given to the messengers sent by the Israelites to explore the country. Joshua cursed the town, and pronounced an anathema against any one who should attempt to rebuild its walls. This malediction did not prevent an idolater of Bethel, named Hiel, from rebuilding them, during the reign of Ahab. Hiel was punished for it by the death of all his children.

The last kings of Judah had embellished Jericho. Herod of Ascalon erected a palace, and fixed his residence there. There, too, was a magnificent amphitheatre which the Romans seized during the reign of Vespasian. Antony had made Cleopatra a present of the domain of Jericho.

This place now consists of a few huts, built of earth or reeds. An enclosure, formed of faggots, of thorns, and thistles, which the jackals scale in the night, is a substitute for walls. Apart stands a square tower, which is falling to ruin ; this is the mansion of the governor.

We alighted at this place and entered a court, where we found some Bedouins, their wives, and their children, lying round a reservoir full of brackish water. A little further on were assembled asses, goats, and fowls ; among which we remarked with surprise a superb horse, black as jet, with flowing mane and majestic port, the finest

animal I ever beheld. He belonged to the governor. Such was the filthy state of the court that we knew not where to set our feet. We, nevertheless, needed some refreshment ; for we wished that same day, if possible, to visit the spring whose water Elisha changed from bitter to sweet. At length, on prowling about in the environs, we discovered an old wall still of sufficient height to afford us some shade. At the foot of it ran the water of a little spring, along a wretched turf scorched by the sun : thither we hastened to seat ourselves. The provisions were brought; but, to our great mortification, they were found much less in quantity than we expected. The person who had been especially charged with this business at Jerusalem had not calculated upon thirty travellers ; and the knavery of our Arab, by the way, had aggravated the inconvenience. On the other hand, in vain we offered to pay a very high price for bread, or at least for flour for making cakes. Meanwhile our Bedouins asked importunately for something to eat. At length we were fortunate enough to procure a very fine sheep. Till it could be cooked, we satisfied our people in the best way we could.

While we were taking our frugal meal, the sheik came and sat down by us. He appeared to be hungry, and accepted, without hesitation, what it was in our power to offer him. At the moment when he was raising what had been given him to his lips, a Bedouin approached. He immediately lowered his hand, and shared his portion with his travelling companion ; but no sooner had he made this generous division, than up came another Bedouin, to whom he cheerfully gave half of what he had left. Nothing surpasses the generosity of the Arab on such an occasion ; he shares his food with the first comer. The poor wretch who passes before his tent enters without being invited ; drinks, eats, and goes away without so much as thanking him, because his heart tells him that he would do the same. "O ye wealthy of Europe," I exclaimed, "ye, who are taught by a religion of truth that the poor are your brethren, that ye ought to be their supporters, their protectors ; that the riches which you possess have been given to you not to

gratify sensual appetites and vanity, but that you might expend the surplus in good works, and especially in works of charity; ye who forget on what conditions heaven has committed to you this sacred deposit, and squandering it every day, offend God at the same time that you commit a sort of robbery in regard to the poor; ye rich without compassion, come and contemplate the Bedouin!"

The moment we had finished our repast, we hastened to take advantage of the remainder of the day for the excursion which we had planned. The aga resolved to accompany us. He mounted the beautiful horse, of which I just made mention, and during the ride he amused himself with making him cut capers. In an hour we arrived at Elisha's spring.

The water of this spring is beautiful, limpid, excellent. It gushes forth in an inconsiderable stream, but of picturesque appearance. In the time of Elisha, this water was unwholesome and pernicious, not only to man and beast, but also to trees and plants, which perish under its influence. The inhabitants of Jericho, grieved at the continual mischief which it occasioned, had recourse to the prophet; hoping that, by his intercession, God would be pleased to put a stop to it. They went to seek him.

"Behold, I pray thee," said they to him, "the situation of this city is pleasant, as my lord seeth: but the water is naught, and the ground barren. And he said unto them: Bring me a new cruse, and put salt therein. And they brought it to him. And he went forth unto the spring, and cast the salt in there and said: Thus saith the Lord, I have healed these waters; there shall not be from thence any more deaths or barren land. So the waters were healed unto this day, according to the saying of Elisha, which he spake." (II Kings xi. 19, et seq.)

We all drank of this water with extreme pleasure.

We were at the very foot of the mountain in which the spring has its source, and I was the more desirous to go up to the top of it, because it was on these rocks that our Saviour passed forty days in fasting and prayer. I should there have seen, moreover, the remains of a

building and a church, the more venerable, inasmuch as, according to grave traditions, it was here that the monastic life commenced. I know, besides, that from the top the view extends over the whole country of the Ammonites ; but it was now too late to gratify my curiosity, however strong it might be. It was time to return to Jericho.

On our way thither we passed some ruins, which are no doubt those of an ancient town. On reaching our quarters, we found ourselves in a double dilemma : a great number of mouths and but little food for them. Thanks to the sheep which had not yet been consumed, to the rice which we discovered in our baggage, and above all, to greater moderation than usual, we got over the first inconvenience. The second remained undiminished. Surrounded by men, women, and children, whose filthiness made the heart heave, we had reason to apprehend miseries of more than one kind, if we should have the imprudence to stay with them. I proposed to pass the night on a greensward, which I had perceived near some nopals ; and, having already set the example by going thither, I began to arrange matters, and to cut off with my sword the long sprays of those trees to make a shelter for ourselves, when our sheik came with loud cries to oppose our intention of sleeping out of doors. He then fell to enumerating the risks that we should run.

"The least," said he, "is to be killed by the Bedouins, or devoured by wild beasts ;" adding, in a solemn tone : "I have made myself responsible for you to the governor of Jerusalem, and, if I am to keep my word, I must insist on your going back to the *castle*." Unwilling to cross him, we abandoned our resolution.

On our return, we found our dragoman haranguing the crowd collected round him, and reading to it the governor's firman. He might have introduced into it just what he pleased ; for not a creature, not even the sheik or the aga, could read.

At last, however, we were invited to go and sleep on the platform of the tower, and were absolutely forced to comply. We ascended to it by a stone staircase in bad

condition, had the place swept as clean as possible, and fixed our quarters there.

Luckily, the night was magnificent: the stars shone with extraordinary brilliancy. Wrapped in my cloak, I sat down on the platform, but, though much fatigued, I could not close my eyes: sleep fled at the idea which wholly engrossed me, that I was at Jericho, not far from the Jordan and the Dead Sea. I was agitated by my recollections, as though I had seen the army of the Israelites making a circuit round the city, followed by the priests with the ark of the covenant; as though I had heard the piercing din of the trumpets, and the crash of the falling ramparts, and the shouts of victory raised by Joshua's soldiers. Then the wretched scattered cabins, which, from the point whence I surveyed them, seemed scarcely to rise above the ground, affected my soul, by reminding me of the anathema pronounced by the conqueror, and showing all that remains of towns when God has cursed them.

At three o'clock I went down stairs. The new day was to be to me one of the most memorable that I had passed in the Holy Land; I was about to devote it to the contemplation of places for ever celebrated in sacred history, and every moment lost was a theft committed upon my religious curiosity.

At half-past four we were all on horseback. The aga of Jericho, armed with a spear, continued to accompany us. We marched in silence over a sandy plain, on which the sun, rising magnificently from behind the mountains of Arabia Deserta, poured a flood of dazzling light. Scarcely could we hear the footfalls of our horses. At intervals we perceived, here and there, patches of green-sward besprinkled with flowers; but in vain did I listen; not a bird of morning hailed by his lays the return of light. The Bedouins acted as scouts, examining every bush. The sheik and the aga advanced cautiously. The idea of God filled my heart. I was on the scene of so many wonders! I was approaching the most celebrated river in the world! that river whose waters parted to afford a passage for the army of the Israelites; that river, on the banks of which the voice of the Almighty was

heard in these words ;—“ This is my beloved son ;” and I was going to the very spot where Jesus was baptised by his holy precursor ; in short, I was going to the JORDAN. I murmured that name with delight.

In my youth, when approaching the Tiber, I had felt a profound impression, but an impression that affected the mind more than the heart : here it was the reverse. The idea of the Tiber, and all the recollections which it calls forth, left my eyes dry ; not so that of the Jordan, and of the circumstances connected with it. The bushes became by degrees more numerous, a livelier green indicated that the wished-for river was not far distant. I handed my arms to my dragoman. I did not like to approach it in a warlike attitude. Presently I perceived a yellowish winding stream, running with great rapidity between two banks, planted with willows. This was the Jordan. On the side upon which we were, the bank is very steep, and the river at a considerable depth below it ; but this is not the case on the opposite side. I fell upon my knees, and, according to custom, I read the holy Scripture. But how much more intensely did I feel this sort of impression, which is almost involuntary, when reading the circumstances on the very spot where they occurred !

My travelling companions bathed in the river. I had purposed to bathe too, and even to swim across it ; but, as it was only seven o'clock in the morning, as I was in a perspiration, and it was but a few months since I had been struck with paralysis, I durst not venture.

The water was not four feet deep ; but the current is so rapid, that those who attempted to pass from one bank to the other, without swimming, had great difficulty to do so : it was only by laying hold of each other's hands that they were enabled to withstand the impetuosity of the river. The Greek pilgrims deem it wrong to return to their own country without plunging in and washing themselves ; and it is rare that any of them fall victims to the practice.

The Jordan rises in a mountain of the Lebanon, proceeds from north to south, between hills which overlook an extensive plain, runs through the lake of Genesareth

and is lost in the Dead Sea, after a course of about one hundred and fifty miles.

Its breadth, at the part where we are, is one hundred and sixteen English feet, or fifty-four paces : in other places it is much wider. Near its mouth, its bed is at least three hundred feet broad.

Time was precious : our sheik declared that it would be the height of imprudence to tarry longer. According to him, we had to apprehend every moment some attack from the Arabs ; he was even certain that the man who had sold us the sheep had come solely for the purpose of counting our number ; there were enemies concealed among the clumps of trees by which we were surrounded, and so forth. He insisted that we must absolutely be going.

We replied that we were well aware of the motive for such language by which his countrymen strove to frighten travellers ; that we had not come so far, and so well armed, to run away like cowards ; that all the Arabs in the world could not intimidate us ; and that we would stay just as long as we thought proper.

Among the things which I intended to do before we retired, there were some which, though of inferior interest, I should have been mortified to be obliged to give up. I wished to take with me a few bottles of the water of the river, to pick up a few pebbles from its bed, to pluck some reeds, and to cut myself a cane from one of the trees on the bank : but an idea of far greater importance occupied my mind, and, had I not carried it into execution, it would ever after have haunted me like a sort of remorse. I wished, at the very spot where our Saviour was baptised, to renew my baptismal vows—vows made to God for me, by those who, at my birth, carried me to the sacred font ; which I confirmed myself on the day when I had the happiness to partake for the first time of the holy sacrament ; and which, nevertheless, in the stormy course of my life, I had, alas ! so often broken. It was this resolution that I executed first.

Kneeling on the margin of the river, my head bowed down to the water in which I had just washed myself, my hand upon my heart, agitated by repentance, grief,

and love, and calling God and his angels to witness the sincerity of my sentiments, I uttered, in a voice tremulous with emotion, the following words :—

“O my God ! O God, most mighty, most bountiful, most clement, and most merciful ! I humbly come to the place where thy Son, my Saviour, was baptised, to renew, from the bottom of my soul, the sacred engagements of my baptism : I renounce Satan, his pomps, and his works ; and I give myself up entirely to thee, O my God, to love and to serve thee till my latest breath !”

More than an hour had by this time elapsed. The sheik grew impatient ; the janissary, nay, our dragoman himself, grumbled ; and, at length, to abridge the delay, if possible, they all made themselves ready for starting. The sheik, the aga of Jericho, and our Turkish soldier, leaning against their horses, waited for me, lance in hand ; behind them were our janissary and dragoman ; farther on, upon a rising ground, part of our escort were looking steadfastly at the road leading to the Dead Sea ; the rest kept at a certain distance to form the rear. The scene was truly picturesque.

It was not without a pang that I found myself compelled to leave the Jordan so soon. In retiring from it, I sighed, frequently turned my head to look at it once more, to see the reeds, the patches of greensward, the clumps of willows on its banks ; and, when I had lost sight of it, felt the same sort of pain that one experiences at parting from a friend whom one is not likely to meet again.

We had still two leagues to go before we should reach the Dead Sea. As I approached it, I fell into a kind of melancholy, for which I could not account. I went at a footpace ; I advanced unwillingly. The ground over which we were proceeding was a white sand, profusely mixed with particles of salt, and so loose in some places that the horses sank in it up to their knees. The janissary never ceased warning and exhorting us to use the greatest caution, and thought that he had never said enough.

On our right rose hills of sand and chalk, which sur-

prise the traveller by the singularity of their form ; you see towers, bastions, pyramids, tents, spectres, fantastic figures. On whatever side I cast my eyes, I perceived only a dreary and sterile nature : all objects are of one uniform colour, white or yellowish ; except that, from time to time, you perceive a patch of herbage, parched up and impregnated with salt. I have travelled a great deal, but never met with anything like this.

We were now approaching the desolate shore of the sea that we had come to visit. We alighted from our horses near a heap of stones which looked very like the ruins of some castle. I was told that this is the place where salt is extracted from the water of this sea ; that on the top of these ruins are stationed sentinels to watch that the Arabs do not carry off the animals waiting in the plain for their load.

On advancing to the shore, the first remark I made was, that, notwithstanding a cold and violent north-west wind, the water was scarcely curled, and that it did not break against the beach.

No noise of waves ever interrupts the death-like silence which pervades this region, still horror-stricken at the crimes committed there of old, and at the vengeance inflicted on their account by the Lord. Its bosom contains not a single living creature ; no vessel cleaves its waters ; no bird builds its nest, and sings its loves, in their vicinity ; not a tree grows, not a plant blossoms there : nothing is to be seen but a few sickly, stunted shrubs.

I filled a bottle with water, and lifted it to my mouth ; but I was forced to spit it out again, upon pain of having my tongue and the roof of my mouth flayed. It is infinitely more pungent than that of other seas ; it is, nevertheless, somewhat oily, and, above all, so limpid that the pebbles may be seen most distinctly at the bottom of the basin which contains it. I picked up some of these stones, which I expected to find very hard : in the air they broke of themselves, and seemed to be calcined.

The Mussulmans of our escort bathed and performed

the ablutions prescribed by the Koran. None of our other travelling companions followed their example, which gave me the more pleasure, because, had they acted otherwise, it would have been profaning in some measure the bath of the Jordan. I sealed up, on the shore of the sea, a large bottle filled with its water, and three others with that of the Jordan; after which I strolled away in quest of some of that fruit which has become so celebrated by the name of Sodom apples, and which resembles, both in colour and shape, large lemons, but has neither their solidity nor their taste. I knew that their beauty pleases the eye, but that, when squeezed ever so little, they break, and you find within nothing but wind and grubs. My search was fruitless. I have, however, seen some of them, but could not procure any excepting at Jerusalem.

After a slight repast, taken apart, we returned to the sea. I was engaged with some of our companions in chasing an enormous lizard, which had crept under a heap of stones; when, all at once, we heard cries of "Come back! come back! the Arabs are coming down the hill." Several times during the day we had had a similar warning; we paid little attention to it at first; but, presently, perceiving a great bustle among the people of our escort, we deemed it prudent to rejoin them, and, accordingly, proceeded towards them, but at a very slow pace. In a few moments all were ready to return; and we set out, after passing three hours near this lake of death.

Experience has confirmed the truth of the statements of respectable writers, relative to the dangers of the journey to the Dead Sea and the Jordan; it is very certain that it would be impossible for a traveller to go thither alone. The Greek pilgrims themselves, who, on Easter Tuesday, repair to the Jordan, to the number of three or four thousand, are always accompanied by the governor of Jerusalem and three or four hundred soldiers. I am, nevertheless, convinced that the people of the country sometimes exaggerate the danger to induce travellers to take with them a large escort. For the rest,

the Arabs of the present day are still as at the time of Saladin,

gli Arabi avari,
Ladroni in ogni tempo e mercenari.*

Had I needed further proof of this, I should have been furnished with it a few moments after our departure.

I had been scarcely half an hour on horseback, when I perceived that I had left behind on the shore a very fine reed from the Jordan. Not liking to lose it, I desired our dragoman to tell one of our Arabs, who appeared to be an intelligent fellow, to turn back and look for it, promising him a handsome *bakschisch*, if he brought it to me. "I would lay a wager," said Mons. R "that if he cannot find it, for fear of losing the *bakschisch*, he will cut another reed from the margin of the lake which we left just now, and will bring it to you as your's." I replied that the fraud would be too obvious not to be detected; and that, besides, my reed was broken. A few moments afterwards, shouts of joy were heard issuing from a cloud of dust, and announced to me the return of my messenger. Bating the lie, he had recovered my reed. His first word, brandishing it that I might notice it, was *Bakschisch! Bakschisch!* But, as Mons. R had predicted, the fellow brought a reed from the banks of the sea in question. I looked steadfastly at him, and clapped spurs to my horse. He said not a word more, but kept hovering about me the whole day, while I pretended not to notice him. However, before we parted, I gave him a trifle, not for the reed, but merely for the trouble of going to and fro, which I did not wish him to take for nothing.

Though, in general, the appellation of *sea* is given only to those immense expanses of water which encompass the land, or which cover a large portion of the surface of the earth in the interior of continents, this word is frequently used in Scripture to designate certain masses of water of far less extent. The Dead Sea is, at

* Tasso, *Gierusalemme liberata*, cant. ix., v. 6.

the utmost, twenty-four leagues in length, and five or six wide. It is called in Genesis (xiv. 3), and in Numbers (xxxiv. 3), the Salt Sea; in history it is named the Eastern Lake, Lake Asphaltites, the Sea of Sodom, the Sea of the Desert; and, by the Arabs, Barrei Louth, that is, the Lake of Lot. It covers the beautiful valley of Siddim, where were situated the five guilty cities, Sodom, Gomorrah, Adama, Seboim, and Bala, or Segor. Before the terrible chastisement inflicted by God on the Pentapolis, the country was so fertile, its woods, its groves, its orchards, watered by the Jordan, were so agreeable, so delightful, that the Scripture likens their advantages to those of Egypt, and represents it as the garden of the Lord (Gen. xiii. 10).

It is now a region of desolation and death. The divine malediction is not confined to the bed of the waters; it is stamped upon the shores and upon the surrounding country. It is, as it were, but dust, but ashes, like those of a large fire—ashes, to which dews and rain cannot impart either life or fertility.

Vestiges of the reprobate cities still exist in the Dead Sea. This is a fact, regarded at the present day as incontestible: several travellers have discovered in it remains of walls, pillars, and particularly ruins, conjectured to be those of Segor, a town which was at first spared at the prayer of Lot, but which was finally engulfed when he had withdrawn from it.

I should have been glad to have had an opportunity of satisfying myself on this point, by deferring my return till the evening of the following day; but this would have been too dangerous under the present circumstances, with the ephemeral government which rules Palestine, and which is most frequently obliged to tolerate or to leave unpunished the crimes which the Arabs are pleased to commit. It is to be presumed, however, that, if the Egyptian sway becomes firmly established, order will be restored. Travellers will then be able to visit these parts with greater safety, and, by means of small vessels, which may easily be constructed, to discover the monuments of the wrath of God at the bottom of the sea which has engulfed them.

Writers and geographers have stated that the Dead Sea is frequently covered with a thick vapour or smoke, which rises from its bosom : others have asserted the very contrary. The fault of travellers in general is, that they make too short a stay in the countries which they visit to be able to say, in a positive manner, what is or is not in this or that country.

For my own part, whenever I have ascended the Mount of Olives, and also during my stay at Bethlehem, I have had occasion to remark this vapour. There are days when it is scarcely perceptible, but in general it is seen very distinctly.

The salt obtained from the Dead Sea forms an important article of commerce. The Arabs carry it for sale to all parts of Palestine, and it is the only kind that is used there. It is universally admitted, that to the abundance of this salt is to be attributed the extraordinary gravity of the waters from which it is extracted. Josephus, in the fourth book of his History of the War of the Jews, relates that it supports upon the surface everything that is thrown into it ; he adds, that the emperor Vespasian, to convince himself of the truth of this assertion, ordered several persons with their hands and legs tied, to be thrown in, and that not one of them sank. Perhaps we may be allowed to entertain some doubt of the truth of this statement. What I can assert as much more certain is, that several travellers, who have bathed in this water, have floated upon it without being able to swim ; but this does not appear to me a sufficient reason for running the same risk.

During the journey I frequently questioned individually the Arabs of our escort and their chiefs, to ascertain if it had ever come to their knowledge that persons who had dwelt from infancy on the shores of this sea had seen any fish in it ; they were unanimous in replying *Never*. These men could not have any interest in deceiving me : I consider their testimony as the most positive confirmation of the accounts of historians and travellers, especially those of Marison, who asserts that "such is the noxious nature of these waters, that they suffer

nothing that has life to exist in them, and that they kill the fish of the Jordan, which have no sooner entered than they find their grave in them." There are persons who think that not even microscopic animals can subsist there. It has frequently happened that I have met with small white shells, and empty, like those of snails, but they were at a great distance from the shore, and probably came from the Jordan.

To judge from the efforts which I made to obtain precise intelligence on the subject of the chastisement inflicted on Lot's wife, it is very difficult, not to say impossible, to assign the spot where the disobedience of this woman was punished by her transformation into a statue of salt. It was incontestably at some point very near the shore, but which that is, the diversity of accounts will not admit of deciding. At any rate, the certainty of the fact, attested by the narrative of Moses, and confirmed by the words of Christ himself, is not to be impugned.

We advanced towards Jerusalem, amidst arid mountains, dry torrents, a country entirely desert, similar in this respect to the road which we had travelled the preceding day. As then, eagles were soaring in the air, but in greater number, and sometimes came, flapping their wings, to settle on the heights. Among the rocks, of fantastic shapes, which presented themselves to our view, some exhibited a few blades of grass; others displayed, even on their bare flanks, a patch of verdure, with red or yellow flowers, which render them still more horrible: images which, I must confess, reminded me, in spite of myself, of those women, slaves to the world, whom age and the passions have robbed of their charms; and who, by the flowers with which they continue to adorn themselves, only render the ravages of time more conspicuous and more hideous.

As for roads, there are none, excepting narrow paths, the traces of which appear and disappear, as it were, at the same instant. We met, at intervals, one or two Bedouins, armed with muskets, whom our advanced guard stopped and searched, to ascertain whether they had any

tobacco, and to rob them of it. These men suffered the greatest part of their provisions to be taken from them without saying a word, calculating, no doubt, that they should make themselves amends on the morrow: had our's been the weaker, they would have submitted to their lot, with the same resignation and in the same hope.

Meanwhile, we pursued our route, without knowing where we were to pass the night. The sheik, the Bedouins, our Turkish soldier, the dragoman, and the janissary, maintained that it would be impossible to reach Jerusalem before sunset, when the gates are closed. They added, that our horses were jaded, and that the safest way was to go to the camp of our Bedouins, from which we were but a few leagues distant. The sheik, in particular, insisted on going no farther. I peremptorily rejected a proposition which could have no other result than to make us lose a day, without compensating us by a few moments' rest among people whose excessive filthiness would, of itself, have prevented us from sleeping. It was, besides, easy enough to guess the motive which induced our sheik to try to drag us to his residence: he coveted the remainder of our provisions; and feared lest, if he missed this opportunity, he should lose the prize. For this apprehension I speedily perceived a remedy—to give up the provisions to him—my travelling companions assented. No sooner were we in sight of the camp, than we delivered to our escort and its chief the butter and the rice which remained: as for bread, there was none left. You should have witnessed the dreadful dearth which prevailed at that time, to conceive the burst of joy that proceeded from the wretched Bedouins. Our unexpected generosity gave them all that they wished for; of course, there was no longer any question about diverging from our track.

The acclivities are frequent and steep: the heat was excessive; our horses were exhausted with fatigue, and we were all suffering from a burning thirst. We halted in a little plain, where some grass was to be seen. The sheik sent one of his men to some distance for water,

The man staid a long time, and I began to be seriously afraid that we should not reach the Holy City before the gates were shut. I soon cheered myself, it is true, by the thought that the complaisance of the governor would cause them to be opened for us. We had still two leagues to go, and the sun was gradually sinking behind the rocks. The night promised to be magnificent; I found it delightful after the scorching heat of the day.

After we had passed through Bethany, the sight of which renewed all my emotions, all my recollections, our guides, wishing to take a shorter way, led us through places so encumbered with stones, that sometimes our horses were stopped short, and we were obliged to alight. My poor mare was knocked up.

At length we reached the side of the Mount of Olives, and descended by the tombs of the Jews, whence we perceived the "melancholy" walls of Jerusalem, rising above Mount Sion and Mount Moriah, like a funeral *catafalque* in ruin. That multitude of tombs, whose white stones were visible amid the darkness; those of Absalom and Zachariah, the pinnacles of which were discernible, those places of mourning, those monuments of death, that dust of sepulchres with which I was surrounded, that doleful silence which pervaded these abodes of death—all these forcibly reminded me of the nothingness of human grandeur, of the frailty of life, and transported my thoughts to that sombre region which I must once enter to appear before the awful tribunal of Him, who, in the city that lay before me, mercifully offered himself a sacrifice for the salvation of men; but who, then, alas! will judge me with the severity of his inexorable justice.

It was near nine o'clock, when we found ourselves before the gate of St. Stephen: we begged that it might be opened for us. The Egyptian subaltern, commanding the post, replied that he had not the keys. After a long parley with our dragoman, he was induced, by the promise of a *bakschisch*, to go and acquaint the governor with our arrival. In a few moments he returned, say-

ing, with the expression of regret, that the keys were in the custody of the commandant of the castle, and that it was impossible to obtain admission to him. We were obliged to make up our minds to pass the night in the open air. I would fain have gone till daylight to the tomb of Absalom, or to that of Barachias, but a few moments' reflection made me apprehensive that the inhabitants of the village of Siloa, a fanatical and thievish race, might perceive our light, and come to molest us: we stretched ourselves, therefore, on the ground, without being able to close our eyes. Hunger annoyed us: a small loaf, which had hitherto escaped our researches, and which we discovered at the bottom of one of our panniers, assisted us to take patience. For want of common water, we drank a little of that from the Jordan, and we thus passed the night around our horses, with part of our retinue. The rising sun found me sitting opposite to the Mount of Olives.

At length the gates were opened: we mounted our horses and made our entry, preceded by our guards. As the way leading from the place where we were to the monastery is the Via Dolorosa, I took this occasion to point out the stations to Mons. R. . . , who was by my side.

Had we at first bethought ourselves to go to the Jaffa gate, which, it is true, we could not have done without making a considerable circuit, it would, no doubt, have been opened to us. In consequence of the great number of pilgrims arriving on that side, the keys are always kept there; but, when we thought of this expedient, it was too late.

LETTER XXXI.

Description of Jerusalem—Mount Sion—House of Caiaphas—Tomb of David—The Hall of the Last Supper.

Jerusalem, March 30th, 1832.

HITHERTO, my dear Charles, the various excursions which I have hastened to make, and the time which I have been obliged to spend in furnishing you with the particulars of them, have not allowed me to tell you all that I had to say concerning the city itself, in order to make you acquainted with it. I will make amends as much as I can, in the intervals between my little tours ; intervals, of which I always take advantage, to seek out and to examine whatever can be worthy of the curiosity of the traveller, and especially of the Christian pilgrim. It is an ever new gratification to me, to see again and again the things and the places which I have already seen ; and to explore the interior and the environs of the city ; and this gratification, whenever I am at liberty for a few moments, I never miss any opportunity of procuring myself.

It takes a man, who is not anxious to observe, only an hour, perhaps less, to make the circuit of Jerusalem. I love to tarry before those walls, built with the fragments of destroyed monuments, to contemplate these ruins of men and ages. I cannot pass so many places, where my Saviour himself, eighteen centuries ago, went about doing good, but this recollection again awakens in my soul all the sentiments which affected it the first time ; and when the heart is thus agitated, it is difficult to walk quick.

The walls which form the present inclosure of Jerusalem, if we may believe various accounts,* were built about the year 1534, by Sultan Soliman, only son of

* See d'Anville's Dissertation on the Extent of ancient Jerusalem.

Selim I. Upon them are to be seen various inscriptions which, no doubt, date from that period ; but I have never been able to obtain any explanation of them that satisfied me. There is, perhaps, no city in the world, where it is less possible to procure certain particulars concerning Jerusalem than Jerusalem itself. More than once I have had to rectify the interpretations of my dragoman, who nevertheless passes for an adept in the science of inscriptions : he has not always a correct and precise idea of them : he confounds things. A person who has rendered me signal service in this point, is the good brother Elias, of the monastery of St. Saviour, who, having resided thirty years in the Holy Land, is thoroughly acquainted with the country. I have only to regret that his age and his occupations have not permitted him to accompany me in my walks.

D'Anville has proved by strong arguments, and by the measurements which he made on the spot, that ancient Jerusalem could not have been much larger than the modern. It stood nearly on the same site ; with this difference, however, that Calvary was not within its inclosure, but that Mount Sion was. Soliman, on learning that the architect employed in the construction of the walls of the new Jerusalem had not included Mount Sion, ordered his head to be struck off. The walls are about one hundred and twenty feet high : their thickness appeared to me not proportionate to their height. You see in them stones which belonged to the ancient temple, and which are of extraordinary dimensions.

Ancient Jerusalem had twelve gates :

1. The Cattle gate, *porta Gregis*, built by the high-priest Eliasib. It was thus called, because the cattle, destined for the sacrifices in the Temple, entered at it.

2. The Fish gate, *porta Piscium*, thus named, because it led towards the sea, and the fish, destined for the supply of the city, was brought in that way. It was built by the children of Asnaa, on the return from the Babylonian captivity.

3. The Ancient gate, *porta Vetus*, to which this name was given, because the Chaldeans left it standing when

they destroyed all the others. It was rebuilt by Jehoiada, son of Phasea.

4. The Dung gate, *porta Sterquilinia*, by which all sorts of filth were carried out of the city towards the west.

5. The Valley gate, *porta Vallis*, leading to the valley of Jehoshaphat, where the bodies of those who had been executed on Mount Calvary were thrown. This gate was built by Hanun, after the return from Babylon. Subsequently it was called the Golden gate, *porta Aurea*.

6. The Fountain gate, *porta Fontis*, near the spring of Siloa, and which adjoined the king's gardens. It was rebuilt by Sellum, son of Choloza.

7. The Water gate, *porta Aquarum*, through which passed the Nathinians, who carried water for the service of the Temple.

8. The Horses' gate, *porta Equorum*, erected by the priests. It was through this that the horses were taken to water.

9. The Judgment gate, *porta Judicii* or *Judicialis*. It did not lead out of the city.

10. The gate of Ephraim, *porta Ephraim*, at which entered the people of the tribe of Ephraim who were going to Jerusalem.

11. The gate of Benjamin, *porta Benjamin*, which led to the country of that tribe.

12. Lastly, the gate of the Angle, *porta Anguli*, so named, because it was situated at the point where the north wall formed an angle with the west wall.

Jerusalem, at the present day, has but seven gates:—

1. Bab el Kzalil, the gate of the Beloved. It leads to the Bethlehem and Hebron road. It is by this gate that the pilgrims, who come by way of Jaffa, enter the city.

2. Bab el Nabi Dahoud, the gate of the Prophet David. It puts you in the way to Mount Sion, and is nearly facing the Hall of the Last Supper, and the tomb of David.

3. Bab el Maugrabé, gate of the Maugrabins or people of Barbary : it is also called the Dung gate. It is nearly at the angle of the ancient temple, and opposite to the

village of Siloa. This gate is memorable, because it was through this that the Jews made Jesus pass when they took him to Pilate, after they had made him prisoner in the Garden of Olives. Since the invasion, this gate is kept constantly closed, as the garrison is not strong enough to allow posts to be placed everywhere, and the inhabitants of Siloa are strongly inclined to revolt.

4. Bab el Darahie, the Golden gate. It is to the south, and leads to the place of the Temple. It is never opened, because, according to an ancient Turkish tradition, the Christians will, some day or other, enter Jerusalem by it, and make themselves masters of the city. It was at this gate that our Lord made his entry into Jerusalem on Palm-Sunday. The front of this gate is of handsome workmanship.

5. Bab el Sidi Mariam, Mary's gate, leading to the tomb of the Virgin. It is to the east, and faces the Mount of Olives. In all the descriptions of the Holy Land, it is called the gate of St. Stephen, because that saint passed through it when he was led forth to martyrdom. In the time of the Jews, it was the Cattle gate.

6. Bab el Zahara, the gate of the Desert : it is also called Herod's gate. It is to the north, and leads to the way to the grotto of Jeremiah. It is between St. Stephen's and the Damascus gate.

7. Bab el Hamond, or Bab el Cham, the gate of the Pillars, or of Damascus. It opens into the road to the Tombs of the Kings ; to Naplouse, the ancient Sichem ; to St. Jean d'Acre, and to Damascus. Simon, the Cyrenean, was coming in by this gate when he met our Saviour bearing his cross.

I pause, my dear friend, more especially on Mount Sion, that famous mount where God himself long dwelt, and which has been by turns the object of the benedictions and the lamentations of the prophets. It is a hill, whose height in respect to Jerusalem is nearly as that of Mount Aventine to the Forum at Rome. It would appear much more lofty, if we were to take its height from its base in the valley of Gehinnon. Its appearance is arid, its colour is yellowish. There is not a mountain

in the world, whose history is more gloriously, and, for a greater number of centuries, connected with that of the Christian religion and church, as the symbol and image of which it is always presented. About the year of the world 2988, David took it from the Jebusites, who, protected by a fortress, fancied themselves invincible there. He built a palace upon it, and, as it was the most glorious of his conquests, he not only fixed his residence there, but wished the city to bear its name. Solomon, his son, and the successors of that prince, dwelt there; and displayed in the establishments which they there founded a pomp and magnificence truly royal; so that everything great and remarkable in the long series of events preceding the appearance of the Messiah is linked with the memory of Sion.

But what most enhances its honour and its glory is that the Saviour long and frequently sojourned there, that he often assembled his apostles there, that he there manifested to them his infinite power, as well as his infinite goodness, by the most soothing, as by the most awful of mysteries, and that Sion was in some measure the cradle of his church.

Of the numerous monuments which covered this hill, almost all have disappeared. The only ones of which any traces remain are:—

1. The house of Caiaphas, which I have already had occasion to mention. You have seen, in the description of the Via Dolorosa, that to this place Jesus was taken on leaving the house of Annas, and that there Peter denied him. It is now an Armenian church.

2. The tomb of David.

3. The Hall of the Last Supper. St. Helena converted it into a church, and embellished it with the most magnificent ornaments. The Saracens having, in the course of time, laid it in ruins, Sancia, queen of Sicily, by means of money, obtained its restoration to the Fathers of the Holy Land. In 1561, the Turks took possession of it, and turned it into a mosque. They are still, at the present day, its sole possessors.

Feeling a strong desire to see this memorable place, I

one day told my dragoman to take all the necessary steps for that purpose. Formerly, the matter was not difficult, but it is become so since the entry of the Egyptians. My reputation of physician assisted me, and money did the rest.

On entering, you perceive on the left a small door, leading to the tomb of David, which I could not visit; no Christian being allowed to cross the threshold, let him offer ever so large a sum. The Turks, though accustomed to sell their complaisance, are inexorable on this point. Some travellers, nevertheless, assert that they have penetrated into it, and seen there three tombs hewn in a dark rock. I do not dispute this statement; for my own part, notwithstanding the popularity which I enjoy, and the protection of a number of friends, all the efforts that I made to convince myself of the fact, from personal observation, proved unavailing.

Having ascended on the same side a flight of about twenty steps, you find yourself in a large hall, the vaulted roof of which is supported by two pillars. This is the place where our Saviour held his Last Supper, and instituted the august sacrament of his love, the holy communion.

“And when the hour was come, he sat down, and the twelve apostles with him. And he said unto them, with desire have I desired to eat this passover with you before I suffer And he took bread, and gave thanks, and brake it, and gave it unto them saying, This is my body which is given for you, this do in remembrance of me. Likewise also the cup after supper, saying, This cup is the new testament in my blood, which is shed for you. But behold, the hand of him that betrayeth me is with me on the table.”

On reflecting that I was in the very place where Jesus had directed the celestial banquet to be prepared, where the beloved disciple had reposed upon his bosom, where the apostles had received the bread of life from him who was so soon to die for them and for us, where the wretch who purposed to betray him had imprudently asked if it were *he* who should be the traitor, where that miserable

man had crowned his iniquity by the most heinous of sacrileges, I was touched, melted, thrilled; I adored, I wept with love, gratitude, indignation, and horror.

But the Hall of the Last Supper is not only worthy of our respect because the first Christian passover was held there: how many other recollections not less glorious are connected with it! It was there that, after his resurrection, Jesus more than once visited his disciples; there that, after his ascension, he sent to them his holy spirit, which settled upon them like tongues of fire; there that the first deacons were ordained; and, lastly, it was from this place that the apostles, in obedience to the injunction of their divine Master, set out to "teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost, teaching them to observe all things whatsoever he had commanded them;" well assured that he would be "with them alway, even unto the end of the world."

And I—I repeat it—I was on the same spot, upon my knees, meditating on all these things, and praying with all the fervour of my heart; and the Turks who were present looked at me, without interrupting me, though I remained there long enough to tire their patience.

On retiring, they permitted me to pick up some small stones, and even appeared pleased to see that I attached some value to them.

Two hundred paces from this place are seen the ruins of the house, in which, according to tradition, the Virgin Mary died.

Opposite to Mount Sion, towards the south, is the valley of Gehinnon. It is believed that it was the laystall of ancient Jerusalem; and that a continual fire was kept up there for burning the filth and rubbish which were carried thither from all parts of the city. Beyond this valley is the Aceldama, or field of blood; and, farther on, the country adjacent to Bethlehem.

Towards the north, the wall of the city, built upon Mount Sion itself, intercepts the view of Jerusalem. It runs along, down the hill, to the valley of Jehoshaphat.

Part of Mount Sion is now a burial-place for the Catho-

lics, Greeks, and Armenians. They have separate cemeteries. A stone covers each grave.

Farewell, my dear friend. My next letter, if I can find time shall make you acquainted with everything else that appears worthy of remark in the interior of Jerusalem.

LETTER XXXII.

Population—House of Dives—Scene of the Martyrdom of St. James the Great—Grotto of the Immaculate Conception—Prison of St. Peter—House of Mary, Mother of John Mark—Ancient Christian Hospital, built by St. Helena—Pool of Bethesda—Interior of Jerusalem—Quarter of the Armenians—Streets—Synagogues—Jewish School—Jews.

Jerusalem, April 3d, 1832.

I PERCEIVE, rather late perhaps, my dear friend, that I have as yet said nothing precise to you concerning the present population of Jerusalem; an omission for which I will make amends before I enter upon the details promised in my last letter.

Most geographers assign to Jerusalem only seventeen or eighteen thousand inhabitants. If I may depend on the information that I have collected on this head, and I have good reason to believe it to be correct, this city now numbers nearly twenty-one thousand inhabitants, composed of

Turks	13,000
Jews	4,000
Greeks	2,000
Catholics	1,000
Armenians	500
Copts	60
	<hr/>
	20,560
	<hr/>

In this number are not included the travellers, whom curiosity or business brings to Palestine ; and, still less, that multitude of pilgrims of all nations, drawn thither by the pious wish to visit and honour the holy places.

Among the objects or places which I have not yet touched upon, those most worthy of engaging the attention or interesting the devotion of the Christian are the following :—

1. The place where Lazarus, the beggar, lay ; and the house of the rich man. This place and this house are at a very little distance from one another, in the Via Dolorosa.

“ There was a certain rich man, which was clothed in purple and fine linen, and fared sumptuously every day. And there was a certain beggar, named Lazarus, which was laid at his gate, full of sores, and desiring to be fed with the crumbs which fell from the rich man’s table : moreover the dogs came and licked his sores. And it came to pass that the beggar died, and was carried by the angels into Abraham’s bosom : the rich man also died, and was buried. And in hell he lifted up his eyes, being in torments, and seeth Abraham afar off and Lazarus in his bosom. And he cried and said, Father Abraham, have mercy on me, and send Lazarus that he may dip the tip of his finger in water and cool my tongue, for I am tormented in this flame. But Abraham said, Son, remember that thou in thy lifetime receivedst thy good things, and likewise Lazarus evil things, but now he is comforted and thou art tormented.” (Luke xvii. 19, et seq.)

This history, I know, has been considered by many as a mere parable ; but the Fathers of the church, whose authority is of much greater weight, Tertullian, Origen, St. Irenæus, St. John Chrysostom, St. Clement of Alexandria, St. Ambrose, and others, have no doubt of its being a true history ; and tradition, which has even preserved the memory of the places, serves to confirm the correctness of this opinion.

I must confess to you, my dear friend, I frequently pass, especially during this holy season, along the Via

Dolorosa ; and I never can stop before the station of the poor beggar, before the house of the rich man, without feeling poignant regret, without recollecting that I too was once a rich man, and without lamenting the bad use which I so long made of the wealth which Providence had placed in my hands, as a resource for the poor and a means of salvation for myself. Then, in the bitterness of my soul, have I implored forgiveness of God, and prayed that he would be pleased to accept, as an atonement, the voluntary poverty which I have embraced ; and to which I hope, with his grace, to adhere to my latest breath.

2. The place where St. James the Great suffered martyrdom.

On this spot now stands a convent, and one of the finest and largest churches in Jerusalem. The dome, supported by four pillars, is open at top, like that of the Holy Sepulchre. To the left is a small chapel, on the very spot, as it is believed, where the apostle was beheaded by command of Herod Agrippa. The Catholics go thither to perform mass, once a year.

This church was built at the cost of the kings of Spain, for the numerous pilgrims of their nation. In the sequel, it was taken from them by the Armenians, who have retained possession of it. It is decorated with several pictures of the Greek school and some very beautiful tapestry, and adorned by a great number of lamps.

3. The house of Simon, the Pharisee.

It was to this house that Mary Magdalen repaired, when she heard that Jesus was dining there, and, throwing herself at his feet, washed them with her tears, dried them with her hair, and anointed them with an ointment which she had brought with her.

4. The grotto of the Immaculate Conception, at a little distance from the house of Simon.

It is under an ancient church, formerly belonging, as well as the monastery, to a society of nuns. Nothing is left of it but ruins ; the approach to it is horrible. One day I found very near it a camel, in a state of putrefaction, and a troop of dogs, fighting for the pieces of flesh,

which they tore from it. The stench was so insupportable that I was obliged to turn back. It is an established practice in the towns and villages of the East, not to remove the bodies of animals from the places where they die : the infectious odour which they diffuse is of longer or shorter duration, according to the diligence used by the birds of prey and the dogs in devouring them.

I have already had occasion to lament with you the deplorable state of so many places at Jerusalem that are sacred for the Christians : that where our Lord was scourged ; that where he sunk, for the third time, under the weight of the cross ; and others. The Turks have turned them into receptacles of the most disgusting impurities.

5. The prison of St. Peter.

Here, apprehended by command of Herod Agrippa, the apostle was confined. To prevent his escape from that death which he was doomed to suffer in the presence of the people, after the feast of the Passover, the tyrant caused him to be fastened with two iron chains, and placed over him a guard of sixteen soldiers—precautions which were frustrated by a miracle of the divine protection. The angel of the Lord descended in the night, awoke the servant of Christ, broke his chains, led him forth, and, having set him at liberty, disappeared.

This prison is a small room, half in ruin. It was once enclosed in a church, dedicated to the twelve apostles, of which a few fragments only are left.

6. The house of Mary, the mother of John Mark, where the Virgin Mary and many believers passed the night in prayer during Peter's imprisonment, and whither the apostle repaired after he had been delivered by the angel.

It is now a church, served by Syrian priests.

7. The ancient Christian hospital, built by St. Helena.

This hospital retains vestiges of the grandeur, the majesty, and the solidity, which characterize all the buildings erected by that illustrious princess. It now belongs to the Turks, who do not refuse admittance to foreigners. I visited it again the day before yesterday.

Formerly, all the Mussulmans who applied here were supplied, in honour of the prophet, with bread, pulse, and, on Friday, with rice ; the dearth which has prevailed for some years has put an end to this charitable donation. Those whom curiosity draws hither are shown eight enormous copper cauldrons, which date from the time of the foundress. One of these cauldrons, of much larger dimensions than the seven others, bears her name. I measured and found it to be one hundred and thirty-three palms in circumference.

While walking about with my dragoman, at the farthest extremity of the hospital, we perceived a Turkish tomb of recent erection. We approached it, when two women with dishevelled hair, one having a child in her arms, ran towards us, with frightful cries and threatening gestures, and asked by what right Christians dared thus come near a Mussulman tomb. I fancied that I saw two furies. Luckily, one of them knew my dragoman, and strove to pacify the other, who looked as though she would have torn us in pieces. Still more luckily, there was no Turk near us to witness the scene.

8. The Probatic, or sheep-pool, called in Hebrew Bethsaida.

This was the finest and largest in ancient Jerusalem. Here the sheep destined for sacrifice in the Temple were washed. It was surrounded by five galleries, for the reception of the sick of every sort who came thither in the hope of a cure.

"An angel," says the evangelist, "went down at a certain season into the pool, and troubled the water : whosoever then first after the troubling of the water stepped in, was made whole of whatsoever disease he had."

Here it was that Christ, seeing a man "who had an infirmity thirty-eight years," lying on the ground, asked him if he wished to be made whole : and, on his reply that there was no one to put him into the pool when the water was troubled, he said to him : "Rise, take up thy bed and walk ;" which the impotent man instantly did.

This pool is about one hundred and fifty feet long and forty wide. It is separated from the precincts of the Temple by a thick wall only. It is now dry, partly filled up, and planted with flowers and fruit-trees. Some of the arcades are still to be seen. This is almost the only relic of the time of Solomon.

But little remains to be said, my dear friend, to give you a complete idea of Jerusalem. When once you are in it, that appearance of grandeur which strikes at a distance, that momentary illusion produced by the imposing aspect of the domes, the mosques, the minarets, overtopping the other buildings—are all over ; Jerusalem appears, to a greater degree than it is in reality, a city of rubbish and ruins. Its square houses, in general small, low, without external windows, covered with a flat terraced roof, above which sometimes rises a little rotunda, look like a heap of stones piled up for the purpose of building a dwelling, rather than a dwelling itself, and produce a most melancholy effect. What are called streets are nothing but narrow, dirty lanes, most offensively irregular throughout their whole length.

The best built quarter is that of the Armenians : some cleanliness is kept up there, and there is even a certain look of comfort, which only serves to make the other parts of the city appear the more hideous.

There are three principal streets in Jerusalem.

The street of the Pillar gate, Hara Bab el Hamond, which runs irregularly through the city from north to south ;

The Via Dolorosa, Harat el Halam, still more irregular than the preceding. It commences at the gate of St. Stephen, passes before Pilate's house, and terminates at Calvary ;

The street of the Great Bazar, Souk el Kebiz.

The other streets are much smaller. Their names are :—

The street of the Christians, Harat el Nassara, which leads from the Holy Sepulchre to the Latin convent of St. Saviour.

The street of the Turks, Harat el Muslemin.

The quarter of the Armenians, Harat el Asman, eastward of the tower of David.

The street of the Temple, Harat Bab Hotta.

The Public Quarter, Harat el Zahara, inhabited by persons of lewd life.

The quarter of the Tunisians, Harat el Maugrabé.

The number of these Tunisians is inconsiderable. It is asserted that they are descendants of the Moors expelled from Spain by Ferdinand and Isabella.

Lastly, the street of the Jews, Harat el Youd, where the slaughter-houses are situated. In this quarter, one of the dirtiest in the city, the Jews assemble for religious worship. My dragoman conducted me thither, and he assured me, by the way, that they are forbidden, on the severest penalties, and even on that of death itself, to pass the church of the Holy Sepulchre—an assertion to which I could not possibly give credit.

Till the destruction of Jerusalem by Titus, the Temple was always the principal seat of the religious worship of the Jews. There were, nevertheless, in the city, numerous meeting-places, called synagogues, to which the people went to pray, to hear the holy Scriptures read and expounded, and to receive various instructions. In the time of Jesus Christ their number amounted, according to some writers, to four hundred and sixty. At the present day there exists but one, which is considered as the most celebrated of any in the world. I had long wished to see this famous synagogue ; yesterday I found means to gratify my curiosity.

On entering I was struck by the wretched and disgusting appearance of a place of prayer destined to receive so great a number of Jews, who throng thither from all parts of the world. It is a vast wooden edifice if one can give it that name, parted off into several divisions, some of which have no roof, while others are covered. In the centre is a shabby pulpit, in which, during religious ceremonies, is read the book of the law, kept in a chest placed at the farther end, opposite to the door, towards the east. The lamps and the benches, from their shattered state, are in perfect keeping with the deplorable condition of the whole.

The women are separated from the men ; they occupy a kind of gallery, which, I must say, looks exactly like a fowl-house, and is quite as dirty as the part appropriated to the men. The young girls are in a sort of room, cut off from all communication with the boys.

No sooner had I set foot in this dismal temple, than an old Jewess, perceiving me, exclaimed : “ Aha ! one of our people ! ” — “ Not exactly so, daughter of Abraham,” I replied, by no means flattered by the mistake which caused her joy. The other Jewesses fell a-laughing at her blunder : they had perceived that I was a monk.

One thing which surprised me not less than the hideous wretchedness of this synagogue was the dress of the congregation assembled there. All, or nearly all, were attired more decently than I should have expected. How was it that people, so strongly attached to their religion, should bestow such pains on their dress, and not take any to keep in order and adorn a place by them reputed holy, and worthy of their highest respect ? I could not at first comprehend so strange a contrast, but a moment’s reflection enabled me to account for it by the fear which they have of appearing wealthy ; and I could not think their anxiety to conceal their riches very unreasonable in a country ruled by the despotic will of a pacha, who never perceives anything illegal in extortion and oppression.

I had never been present at the public service of the Jews, and I had no idea how they conducted the performance. Men, women, children, sitting or standing, all pray, rocking their bodies to and fro all the while. This kind of strongly marked undulation is extremely annoying to the eye that is not accustomed to it. I had great difficulty to endure its effect.

I admired their profound respect of the Old Testament. No people entertain a higher veneration for the books that contain the doctrines, the moral laws, and the history of their religion. I felt shame for certain Christians, alas ! too numerous, in whose libraries the sacred Scriptures, frequently from indifference, sometimes from a sacrilegious combination, are placed beside an impious or an obscene book. Homer was but a man

and Alexander kept his works in a casket of costly wood, adorned with gold and precious stones. Paying less respect to the works of God himself, than pagans, who have been known to honour the Gospel with their reverence ; nay, more shameless than Diderot, the atheist, and the immoral Jean Jaques, who, among their books, always gave to the Bible the place of honour ; Catholics, adjuring all modesty, have gloried in making it the butt of scorn and derision, in consigning it to the abuse of the ignorant, of perverse souls, and of corrupted hearts, after having disfigured it by fathering upon it all the turpitudes of their passions and their thoughts. And then that equally frivolous and irreligious age, which saw this horrible infamy broached, which endured, which laughed at it—that age was astonished when it was overtaken by the days of malediction !

In the synagogue at Jerusalem lamps are kept continually burning before the chests containing the holy Scriptures. These chests are numerous. In them are preserved decalogues of the highest antiquity ; there is one that is considered as the oldest of all known copies. Here are also kept great numbers of complete Old Testaments, for the use of the Jews already settled in the city, or for such as throng thither every year.

The Jews resident in Jerusalem are mostly of foreign extraction. Many of them are descended from wealthy parents, who came from the different countries, through which their nation is scattered, to end their days in Palestine. Most of those whom the same motive still continues to draw thither are rich, and bring with them considerable sums. The Fathers of the Holy Land find among them most serviceable resources, when the usual alms are delayed, as was the case, for instance, at the time of the invasion of the Peninsula by the French. I have no need to remark that their advances are by no means gratuitous : they are paid for at a dear, a very dear rate, it is true ; but, at least, the borrowers contrive with this assistance to escape the rage of tyranny, to save their lives, and in time the charity of Europe comes and enables them to discharge the debt.

These easy circumstances of the Jewish families allow them to dress with more decency, and even with greater elegance, than the other classes of the inhabitants : this circumstance strikes you more particularly on the Saturday. The women, on that day, display a sort of luxury, though, like the Turkish females, they never appear in public otherwise than veiled. For the rest there are no women in Jerusalem who go with their faces uncovered, excepting those of foreign nations who come thither on pilgrimage.

The Jews of this country have been represented by some writers in a light that seems to me absolutely false. It is true that here, as everywhere else, they retain that characteristic type which distinguishes them from all the people in the world ; that seal, that stamp, which neither time nor climate can efface ; it is true that at Jerusalem the Jew is still a Jew, and there, too, interest is his idol ; he has expatriated himself to come and die there : in order that, after death, he may be laid beneath a few stones in the valley of Jehoshaphat, he has left the country in which he was born, his home, his relatives, his friends : with his eyes fixed on the spot where stood the Temple, he deplores its ruin, and sheds floods of tears over the destruction of the Holy City and the dispersion of his nation ; and, with a heart yet heaved by sighs, with eyes yet dim with tears, he is ready to lend, at exorbitant interest, to him who unfortunately is forced to have recourse to his purse.

But, on the other hand, it must be confessed that the Jews of Jerusalem are in general well educated and not deficient in attainments : they understand several languages : almost all of them speak Spanish and Italian. The school, in their synagogue, though inferior to that which they have at Tiberias, which is the most celebrated of all, is directed by masters who devote themselves with zeal to the instruction of the youth committed to their care. They treat their pupils with the more severity, because they conceive that, in so doing, they are conforming with the precepts of the Bible.

When I visited the boys' school, I was struck to see a little urchin, seven or eight years old, tied with a cord, and receiving the bastinado on the soles of the feet. The poor fellow groaned deeply, but without crying, as children generally do. I immediately solicited his pardon, through my dragoman. It was willingly granted by the master. Notwithstanding the severity of the discipline and the incessant studies to which they are kept, all these boys have a cheerful look. The parents, and even the children, have a certain politeness in their manners, which form a singular contrast with those of the inhabitants belonging to other nations.

I have never seen a Jew asking charity; I have never seen one covered with the rags of wretchedness, which are but too frequently met with among the Arabs and the Christians; and this is owing less to the relief which the poor receive from the rich, or from that which foreign synagogues transmit to their indigent brethren, than to activity and industry. The Jew is a stranger to that slothful fondness for rest, so common among the people of the Levant, whose indolent and useless life is the principal cause of indigence. The Jew employs himself; he spreads out, sometimes upon a tottering stone, wares, of such small value, that you are utterly astonished that he can hope to derive any profit from them; but, should he even sell no more than will enable him to procure a morsel of bread, that appears to him preferable to the shame which he would feel in holding out his hand. There are Jews of all trades, of all professions: my tinman is a Jew. As I have occasion for a good many tin boxes and cases, to hold valuable objects, I see him frequently; and his assiduity, his indefatigable activity, always fill me with fresh surprise.

A quality, peculiar here to this class of persons, is a civility, which forms a singular contrast with the rude, uncouth behaviour of the other inhabitants. Have you lost your way? are you seeking a street?—a Jew, be sure, will offer to conduct you; he will even accompany you for a considerable distance; and, too proud to ask for pay, too fond of gain to make an absolute sacrifice of it,

when you have reached the place to which you are going, he will look at your hand, he will cast an eye at your pocket—if you choose to take the hint, well and good.

Do not imagine, however, that, in the Jew, one quality or virtue is a pledge or guarantee for another quality, another virtue: you would run the risk of being deceived, in commerce, at least. Have you any purchase to make? go to the bazaar; it is spacious, and well stocked with everything. You will find it so full of people, especially at the time when the pilgrims are at Jerusalem, that you will scarcely be able to walk through it. You will there find linens and silks from France, woollens from Germany, articles of jewelry, and, generally, whatever you can want; but, be upon your guard, if you would avoid the danger of paying twice as much for goods as they are worth, when sold at a fair profit.

At this moment, the Jews of Jerusalem are building the fondest hopes on the new revelation, which seems likely to subject Palestine, and perhaps all Syria, to the sway of Egypt. They consider Mehemet Ali as destined to rescue them from slavery, and to insure them brighter prospects. This might turn out to be a mistake: * the wily pacha is not yet master of Acre; he knows not what line of conduct the Porte will adopt in regard to him; it is, consequently, his interest to flatter all parties, all creeds, all nations; and this he can do marvellously well. The Christians, themselves, laugh in their sleeve at these events: they no longer pay taxes, and imagine that it will be always thus.

This illusion of the Christians is infinitely more astonishing than that of the Jews. The latter, hated by all nations, debased, despised, humiliated, persecuted,

* When I was writing this at Jerusalem, I was far from thinking that the Jews of that city were threatened with a catastrophe so speedy and so terrible as that which I have recorded in a note attached to Letter XXV., on the authority of a letter, dated July 16th, 1834. Still less did I suspect that it would be from the Arabs among whom they live, that the Jews, "insulted, plundered, slaughtered, would chiefly have to suffer." I have said, and I again repeat it: "I see but too clearly that the desolation continues."

have a real need to hope ; they cannot live but on hope ; and, it is true, still more in this respect than in that of the love of money, as I remarked above, that the Jew is still a Jew. Obligated to submit to the most terrible punishment that ever befel a guilty people, and stubbornly resolved not to acknowledge his crime, he would cease to be of his religion, if he were to cease to expect. Hence, look at him in history, look at him at the present day : always disappointed, he still continues to hope.

Let any intriguer whatever give himself out for the Messiah, he will start up, welcome him with transport, proclaim him at once the GREAT DELIVERER, and, in the delirium of his enthusiasm, he already beholds the Holy City shaking off the enormous weight of the ruins of ages which crush her, and rising before his face in new glory. One only Messiah was, and could be, the true Messiah ; he who had been promised to the first man, after his fall ; he whose coming the prophets had never ceased to foretell to Israel ; he who was to be born, and who actually was born of a virgin ; and, of all the Messiahs of whom mention is made in the annals of the last eighteen centuries, he is the only one whom the Jew has denied. To all the impostors who have usurped that illustrious name he has prostituted his faith, his treasures, his blood, his life ; and, were occasion to offer, he would prostitute them again. In vain, since the anathema pronounced against Jerusalem, does the divine justice continue, from age to age, to manifest itself in the strokes which it inflicts ; in vain does it visibly raise up, from time to time, new agents of its vengeance, to disperse, pillage, slaughter, destroy, and to leave no other trace of guilty Jerusalem but the ground on which it stands—the ground remains ; that is enough to authorize hope ! Alas ! the hapless Jew hath eyes, but he sees not ; ears, but he hears not ; understanding, but he comprehends not. This has been foretold to him : these are the words of Him, whose words shall never pass away.

The sceptre was not to pass from Judah, until Shiloh, the wished-for by the nations, should come. He who

said this, who gave this warning seventeen centuries beforehand, to his posterity, was the patriarch, the father of the twelve tribes, honoured by them as a prophet, by whose lips God himself spake. Where is now this sceptre? in what hands? Does there still exist a Hebrew people collected together into a nation? Has this nation a territory, a government? Where are they? Where is the public authority? Where are its magistrates, its tribunals?—"No matter."

Temple, altar, sacrifice, are they not all gone? are they not all destroyed? And, upon these grand ruins, has not the confusion of the tribes stamped the seal of divine justice?—"No matter."

Where are at this day the sons of Aaron, the sons of Levi, the only legitimate ministers of the Jewish priesthood, the only lawful servants of the tabernacle and the temple, the only persons having a right to touch the censer, to offer to God the blood of the victims, and to enter the holy of holies?—"No matter."

And what is become of Judah? How would the Messiah, who is to descend from him, prove his origin, if he were still to come? How would he get himself acknowledged for his son?—"No matter."

Why this silence of the prophets?—They were destined, from age to age, to remind the nations of Him who was to come to save and to reign over them. In vain you listen—the voice of Jehovah, which transmitted his oracles to them, is mute, mute for ever.—"No matter."

No matter!—Yes, it matters much.

"Well, then," the Talmud says, "Cursed be he who computes the days of the Messiah!"

Such is the last word with the Jew.

And this curse, which threatens any one who shall dare to compute, is sufficient to deter him who is not affrighted by eighteen hundred years of malediction, the cause of which he is the only one to misapprehend! And his mind, obstinately refusing to look back, continues to pursue a future that always escapes him, the while his disappointed hope becomes with him nothing more than a

new motive for hoping on ! And, amidst all the elements of ruins which act upon his existence, which undermine it, which, according to the natural and ordinary course, ought to blend him with the nations among whom he dwells, and finally, to sweep away his very name, as that of so many nations which figured on the stage of the world, has been swept away, he lives, he preserves his distinctive character, he remains a Jew, by a miracle of justice, which he takes for a miracle of mercy, and which authorizes him to continue to hope. He perceives not that he exists much less for his own sake than for the sake of others ; that he is there, carefully keeping and guarding, but as a blind man, the books in which is written the degree of his condemnation, to show it to every one who chooses to read it ; like, let me tell him, a criminal who, by the sentence of his judges, is to be conducted to the place of ignominy, where he has deserved to live, carrying before him a label, inscribed with the judgment, which he alone cannot see, but which strikes the eye of every passenger !

What a strange people !

Jerusalem is, at this moment, thronged with pilgrims of all nations, attracted thither by the approaching solemnities. Most of them are poor, ill clad, and come from infected countries. If we escape the plague, it will be miraculous. The mere idea of the risks we run makes one shudder, and I perceive that the alarm is extending to all persons who reflect. I am, nevertheless, resigned ; and, not only does my faith support me, but it shows me a real happiness in dying on the spot where Jesus my Saviour expired. Then do I exclaim with Tasso :—

Chi sia di noi esser sepulto schivi
Ove i membri di Dio fur gia sepulti !*

and I adore the blessed will of God. These holy places have, moreover, such a charm for me, that I cannot tell,

* “ Which of us would refuse to be buried where the body of the incarnate God was buried !”

especially at this moment, whether I should not determine to stay and defy the disease. Already, though my departure is still far distant, I feel an indescribable oppression of heart; how will it be when the hour has arrived?

Farewell, my dear friend. To-morrow I remove to the church of the Holy Sepulchre, where I shall pass the last fortnight of Lent. I shall not fail to write to you.

LETTER XXXIV.

Seclusion in the Church of the Holy Sepulchre—Cell—Gallery—Pilgrims—Winding-Sheets distributed by the Armenian Priests—Turks at the Door of the Church—Cruel Mode of preserving Order—Palm-Sunday—Procession of the Catholics; of the Armenians—Wednesday in Passion-Week—Office of the Darkness—Maundy-Thursday—Solemn Mass—Procession—Foot-Washing—Good-Friday—The Door of the Church forced by the Greek and Armenian Pilgrims—Dinner of the Community—Darkness—Procession to Calvary—Solemn Service on Holy-Saturday—Contrast between the Catholics and the Greeks—Night between Holy-Saturday and Easter-Sunday—Assemblage of Ten Thousand Pilgrims—Easter-Sunday.

Church of the Holy Sepulchre, April 23, 1832.

ON Saturday, the day before Palm-Sunday, I entered the church of the Holy Sepulchre. Every nook and corner of the buildings occupied by the Fathers of the Holy Land were crowded with monks of the monastery of St. Saviour, who are accustomed to come with the Father warden every week in Lent, to pass the night between Saturday and Sunday, and to remain here the last four days of the Passion-week.

The cell in which I have been placed has no window: it receives no light but by the door, and, as this door

opens into the gallery which is rather dark, I am obliged to burn a candle continually, even at noonday. Of course I shut myself up there as little as possible.

My furniture consists of a bed, a broken table, and a chair ; and this latter article I had a good deal of trouble to procure.

The gallery leading to my cell is upwards of two hundred paces in length, and of proportionate width. Facing it is the Holy Sepulchre, from which it is but twenty feet distant, or thereabout. A special permission is required to tarry in it ; but this the Fathers never refuse. I pass almost all my time there, and very happily. I walk, read the service, and say my prayers there ; and, frequently, leaning over the parapet, I enjoy in silence the felicity of contemplating the spot where the body of Jesus was buried, or I survey with emotion the crowd of pilgrims thronging thither, and undulating—a living flood—around the sacred tomb.

The noise caused by the incessantly increasing influx during the past fortnight, and the continual singing of the Christians of various nations, who successively repair to the church to perform the service, render it almost impossible to get any rest. Your sleep, when you can sleep, is unquiet, disturbed, and broken twenty times in an hour. To this inconvenience is to be added the dampness of the buildings, which alone would seem sufficient cause to keep away from them : but piety deems itself happy to dwell there, and the delightful feelings which it there experiences leave no room for any other consideration.

The moment when my soul most enjoys itself near the tomb of our Saviour is that hour of the night when the Franciscan Fathers come to it to recite their service. The crowd of pilgrims has then retired ; even those who have obtained special permissions keep aloof : so that, for more than an hour, I can pray, adore, enjoy, alone, without molestation, and without disturbance. Afterwards I visit Calvary, and the other sacred places enclosed within the monastery, and there I frequently tarry till daybreak.

I was returning, the other day, from Golgotha, when, on approaching the Holy Sepulchre, I saw some Armenian priests engaged in cutting, by the light of the lamps, pieces of white linen cloth into stripes of a certain length. These they laid upon the sacred tomb, pronounced a blessing over them, wrote upon each some words in their own language, and then distributed them among the pilgrims, who received them with great reverence. I could not comprehend either the object or the aim of this ceremony : though it strongly excited my curiosity, I durst not disturb the devotion of the actors in it by soliciting an explanation. But, presently afterwards, perceiving at the door of the church some of those who had participated in the distribution made by the priests, I asked them a few questions, and learned that what I had seen offered and received with such piety, with such religious reverence, was . . . a shroud !

A shroud ! and the poor pilgrims appeared more delighted to carry home with them this garment of death than ever was ambitious man, driven by the desire of wealth across the seas, when, after a long exile, he returns to his country, laden with treasures : this was to be for each of them, when the last hour should arrive, a pledge of peace and blessing.

I went back to my cell, reflecting on the scene which I had beheld, and, full of the thoughts which it suggested, I could not help acknowledging that, for the man who feels that he is *mortal*, it was fraught with a grand and salutary lesson. To me it appeared scarcely possible to contemplate a shroud, to attach an importance to its possession, to look at that which is to cover our remains without its exercising a powerful influence upon our moral actions. More than once, indeed, in the world in which I lived but too long, I have met with pretended sages, on whom a shroud would, at the moment, have made no impression. These would have shrugged their shoulders with pity, at the mere idea of a pilgrim leaving his country to travel hither, to see nothing but a tomb, to fetch nothing but a winding-sheet. But then wealth, the flower of life, robust health, and the sophistries of

an entirely pagan philosophy, caused them to forget that they were born but to die and to pass to another world, whither they should carry none of those things to which their shallow wisdom gave the preference. And if they have not already been overtaken by nights of pain, of anguish, of agony, when they do come, what will be left them?—a shroud ! a shroud, whose lessons they will probably be sorry that they have not learned ! a shroud, meaner perhaps and poorer than that of the Armenian, whose folly they had deplored !

It is the Turks, as I have told you in one of my former letters (Letter XV.), who keep the keys of the church of the Holy Sepulchre, and sell to pilgrims permission to enter. For this fortnight past, ten or twelve of them have been continually on guard at the door ; while some of them, seated on a divan, are calmly smoking their pipes, the others stand sentry, armed with whips, which they brandish over the heads of the pilgrims, and which they sometimes apply with such violence as to cover with blood those who would force their way in without paying tribute. This distressing sight I have but too often before my eyes ; and I never witness it without being as painfully affected by it as I was the very first time. I must admit that, among the crowd thronging to the church, there are many sailors from the islands of the Archipelago and Greece—men of rough demeanour and ardent disposition, who require keeping in order by severity ; otherwise it would be impossible that the religious ceremonies, successively performed by each of the different nations, could be peaceably and decently solemnized. But the violence, not to say the cruelty of the means employed to preserve order—the arm of a Turk, uplifted over the head of a Christian, whose only crime, after all, is excessive impatience to approach the tomb of his Saviour—this fills me with profound grief ; this rends and revolts my heart.

The day before yesterday, I retired with a soul so afflicted by what I had seen in passing this church, that I could not help going to relieve my heart by communicating to one of our good Fathers the painful feelings

which I experienced. "Alas !" said he, lifting his eyes towards heaven, "alas ! 'Jerusalem hath grievously sinned, therefore, is she removed The Lord hath delivered me into their hands, from whom I am not able to rise up.'* Let us not deceive ourselves, Father," he continued ; "let us not seek elsewhere, but in the sins committed by the Christians, especially in the Holy Land, the cause of the mortification we endure to see the holy places in the hands of the enemies of Christ. They are the instruments by which God punishes our iniquities, our ingratitude." Then, taking a rapid review of the principal traits in the conduct of the Christians, in the years which followed their triumphs in Palestine, he thus proceeded :—

"While Godfrey, the honour and glory of the Crusades, not less by his piety than by his valour, and his brother Baldwin, equally celebrated for his courage and his zeal for the faith, reigned at Jerusalem, the Lord, who had blessed their arms, was pleased to bestow the favours of his mercy on the new state subjected to their authority ; but those who succeeded them did not tread in their noble steps. The Christian army soon plunged into the most frightful disorders ; the scandal, in a short time, attained its highest pitch. It became so great that William, archbishop of Tyre, who had undertaken to write the history of that period, had not the courage to continue it. 'The counsels of wisdom,' said he, 'the law of the priesthood, the words of the prophets, are fled ; these words of Isaiah are verified in the moral sense, in regard to this people :—The whole head is sick, and the heart is afflicted ; from the sole of the foot to the crown of the head, there is no sound place in it.'

"With a deplorable corruption of manners were combined enmities, rivalries, discord, intestine dissensions, which drew upon this country all the scourges of the divine wrath. Fifteen towns, among others Ptolemais, an impregnable fortress, fell, in consequence of these divisions, into the hands of the Saracens. Thousands of

* Lament. Jerem. c. 1.

Christians, who had polluted this land by their abominations, perished by water, by the sword, or by fire, till at last the conquest of Godfrey disappeared along with the sad remnant of the conquerors. God is not to be defied with impunity ; and when it is Christians who are guilty of such excess, they are the more severely punished for it : they know better what they do.

“ You feel indignant, as well you may,” he continued, “ that the crowd should be kept off with a sort of cruelty, and especially that it should be Turks who treat it in this manner. But, before I tell you all I think on this subject, you must admit with me, that it is not since yesterday, but for ages, that the Mussulman has been commissioned by the Most High to chastise the sinful Christian people. God, who is not frightened at the number of the guilty, gives up to him a whole nation as one man to be punished when it deserves it : look at Greece ! On the other hand, do you not perceive something providential in this disposition, which has placed disciples of Mahomet at the door of a Christian temple, and makes them serve as ushers to introduce the disciples of Jesus Christ to their divine master ? The Turks, you will tell me, in so doing, have an eye only to the money. But is it for aught else that the servant acts as usher to his master, and the grandee himself very often to his prince ? All things are instruments in the hands of God.

“ But, to make you thoroughly acquainted with my sentiments—no doubt, among the thousands of pilgrims attracted by the religious solemnities, the greater number have undertaken so long a journey, amid so many perils, merely from motives of faith and love, in order to worship Christ on the spot where he suffered, where he died for us. Still, how many are here this day who seem to have come to Jerusalem solely to renew the crimes and the disorders which have so frequently drawn upon it the wrath of heaven ! Have you not seen in this venerable church, almost at the foot of Calvary, but a few paces from the sacred tomb, Christians forget that it is written : ‘ My house is a house of prayer, and ye have

made it a den of thieves ?' Is it not Christians who have set up those tables, who buy, who sell, who have turned the most sacred spot on earth into a place of traffic, and hold a vile market in it? A thousand times more guilty than the profaning Jews whom Jesus drove out of the Temple, regardless of the seal of redemption with which they are marked, do they not defy the anathema of religion, and the warnings of piety, which is afflicted and alarmed at their conduct? And are you still astonished, Father, that God should chastise, should humble, that he leaves the whip in the hands of the Mussulman, and does not take from him the custody of his sanctuary! The punishment, the humiliation, are but too well deserved!"

I could not deny that the good monk was right. I had seen, with my own eyes, things more deplorable than he had mentioned, things which my pen dares not detail; a hideous medley of superstitious practices, of dances, accompanied with yells, with ferocious cries, the bare idea of which excites horror. Happily, heaven be praised, the Catholics were not implicated in this scandal; it was the Greeks and Armenians only who had taken part in it.

It is unfortunate for the Catholics that their Easter now and then happens at the same time as that of the Schismatic Christians: that was the case this year. The concourse is then so great, that it is no uncommon thing to see persons squeezed to death. Besides, the different ceremonies which those various denominations can only perform successively, are never celebrated with so much regularity and decency, and there is no way to obviate the inconveniences thence resulting, or to prevent accidents. One thing, however, is remarkable, namely, that, notwithstanding this immense concourse of strangers from the Morea, the Archipelago, Constantinople, Russia, Armenia, Natolia, Egypt, Syria, &c., you never hear of any theft or robbery: it may even be asserted that amidst so many pilgrims the most valuable articles are perfectly safe.

On Palm-Sunday commenced the religious ceremonies,

held in commemoration of the last mysteries of infinite mercy, accomplished in Jerusalem in the course of this week, to which the church has so justly given the epithet of *great*. The Franciscan Fathers, the Catholics, who had come on pilgrimage, those of Jerusalem, Bethlehem, and the environs, repaired early to the church. Several Mahometans had mingled with the crowd, and were remarkable for an air of curiosity and respect. Near the altar, set up at the door of the Holy Sepulchre, lay a heap of palm branches, brought the preceding day, according to custom, from the neighbourhood of Gaza. The Father warden, with mitre and crosier, to which, as I have told you, he is entitled by virtue of his office, and covered with a magnificent purple cope : and the priests, who assisted him in sacerdotal habits of the greatest beauty, advanced at a slow pace towards the altar, and the singers struck up the *Hosanna Filio David*, which the people repeated with the warmest devotion.

Meanwhile the reverend Father who officiated blessed the palms : he then took one for himself, adorned with flowers, so wreathed as to form at top the pontifical crown, and gave one, nearly similar, to the Father Procuratore. He afterwards distributed a number of others among the monks and the principal Catholics. I had the honour to receive from his hands a very handsome branch, six feet high, which I hope to bring back with me to Europe, and which I shall preserve as one of the favourite memorials of my pilgrimage.

The remaining palms were distributed among the numerous congregation, by which they were received with religious eagerness. Notwithstanding the precautions taken by the good Fathers, it is rarely the case that enough are provided to satisfy the piety of all ; and it too frequently happens that those who cannot obtain a share, vent their dissatisfaction in loud complaints, or even in violent quarrels. Fortunately, on this occasion, nothing of that kind took place to interrupt or disturb this touching ceremony.

After the benediction and the distribution of the palms, the Father who performed the functions of deacon gave

the signal by these words, pronounced in a loud voice :—*Procedamus in pace*—"let us go in peace"—and the procession immediately began to move. It went thrice round the Holy Sepulchre in perfect order. The magnificence of the ornaments, the harmony of the singing, the devotion of the congregation, the gravity and modesty of the monks, all concurred to produce a lively and powerful impression ; but nothing so deeply touched my soul as the thoughts awakened within me by the chanting of the following words, which express, with such admirable simplicity, the triumph of Jesus when entering Jerusalem :—*Pueri Hebræorum*, &c.—"The children of the Jews took branches of palm-trees, and went forth to meet him, and cried Hosanna in the highest !"

I could not dwell upon the idea that I was there, on the very spot, perhaps, where had stood one of those *children of the Jews*, carrying like them in my hand a palm-branch, brought from the same place, shouting like them, saying like them :—"Hosanna in the highest ! Hosanna to the Son of David !" treading like them in the footsteps of the Saviour—I could not, I say, dwell upon this idea, without a feeling of tender, lively, and profound gratitude to my God.

Formerly, in order to give a still more accurate representation of the triumphal procession of Jesus Christ, all the Fathers of St. Francis went to Bethphage. On their arrival there, the Father warden despatched two of the monks to the place which tradition points out as the spot whither Christ sent two of his disciples, saying : "Go into the village over against you," &c. The monks brought back a she-ass with her colt. Then, throwing their garments on the back of the animal, they placed the most reverend Father upon it, and thus led him to the city by a road which the attendant Catholics strewed with leaves of the palm or olive-tree, loudly singing : Hosanna ! In this manner the procession reached Jerusalem, passing through the gate by which Christ entered the city. The principal reason for the discontinuance of this ceremony is, that it cost a considerable sum to obtain the pacha's permission ; and, for some time past,

the small amount of the donations from Europe prevents the Fathers from giving to Mussulman greediness so much as it would demand.

The procession was followed by the mass, which was performed with great solemnity. Were I here to repeat to you, my friend, all that my preceding letters have told you of the lively, soothing, tender, sad, painful, heart-rending impressions produced in me by the sight of the most holy places in Palestine, I could not convey to you any idea of the emotions which overpowered my soul, while the *passion* was chanted in the very tomb of our divine Saviour. No language can express them; and it is not sufficient to have a heart, you must be at Jerusalem, in the church, in presence of that tomb, in order to feel them.

After the procession of the Catholics, I had an opportunity of seeing that of the Armenians. Considered merely with reference to the splendour of the sacerdotal ornaments and the number of the persons, it presented a more remarkable scene than that which I had attended. It was certainly a magnificent sight that this immense multitude of Christians displayed, bearing the tall palms beneath which they were hidden, and thus exhibiting the appearance of a moving forest, gradually changing its ground, and affording a view, at intervals, of bishops glittering with silver and gold, priests arrayed in richly embroidered garments, and young Levites sending up into the air the smoke of incense and other perfumes. But, in spite of this outward pomp, what a difference in all that concerns the regularity of the procession, the gravity of the chanting, the majesty of the ceremonies, the piety of the congregation, the dignity of the priests, the modesty, the devotion, of the monks, &c. The Mussulmans themselves were so struck with it, that several of them have been heard to say, that if they could believe that their religion is not the true one, they would not hesitate to turn Catholics. Of the service of the Greeks and Armenians they speak only with contempt.

Holy-Wednesday, the anniversary of the day on which the Jews held council upon the means by which they

might make themselves masters of the person of Jesus, and deliver him up to Pilate, is considered by the churches of the East as a day of stations. At three in the morning, the Fathers of the Holy Land went to the grotto of Gethsemane, where our Lord sweated blood, and was seized through the treachery of Judas. It requires a special permission for laymen and strangers to enter it with them. From half past three till seven, they performed eight masses; after which they recited prime, tierce, and sexte. Agreeably to a custom, already very ancient, a Spanish monk chanted the solemn mass. The station concluded with the litanies of the Blessed Virgin; and the Fathers returned to the monastery.

At three in the afternoon, the monks of St. Saviour assembled in the church, and, having taken their seats on benches placed before the Holy Sepulchre, they commenced the service of *the Darkness*, according to the Romish liturgy. This service, which is of very high antiquity, has such a resemblance in its arrangement to that of *the Dead*, that it cannot fail to remind one of the latter. Without invitatory, without hymn, without benediction, it is stamped with a particular character, which excites in the soul feelings of deep sadness; while, on the other hand, most of the psalms, the prophecies, and the lessons which compose the different parts of it, at the same time that they touch and melt the heart, elevate, expand, and console it.

The office of the Darkness, on Holy-Wednesday, opens with the chanting of the second psalm:—

“Why do the heathen rage, and the people imagine a vain thing?”

“The kings of the earth set themselves, and the rulers take counsel together against the Lord and against his anointed, saying,

“Let us break their bands asunder, and cast their cords far from us.

“He that sitteth in the heavens shall laugh; the Lord shall have them in derision.

“Then shall he speak to them in his wrath, and vex them in his sore displeasure.

..... "Be wise now, therefore, O ye kings ;
be instructed, ye judges of the earth !"

Is it not a strange thing, my dear friend, a thing that must produce astonishment not less than admiration, to hear such words around that very tomb into which the hatred of the raging people precipitated its victim, thinking to bury him there for ever ? And when one considers that these words were written some thousands of years ago, quite close to this tomb, by a king of Jerusalem ; when it is after eighteen hundred years of useless leagues and plots, that one hears them resounding on the same spot, like a shout of triumph ; when one has lived one's self in an age of iniquity, when the efforts to break and to cast off the yoke of the Lord and his Christ have been more violent, more obstinate, more artful, than those of all preceding ages, and yet quite as vain ; when, like me, one has witnessed the last leagues, the last plots ; when one has seen the rulers of the earth bent on putting an end to the worship of the Most High, and how the Lord has laughed at their designs, and spoken to them in his wrath—then say, my friend, if it is possible to suppress those feelings which seize the soul, which sway, transport, and ravish it.

After this astonishing succession of thoughts and emotions, so rapid and so various, produced by the psalms of the office of the Darkness, it would seem at first, that the powers of the soul must be in a manner exhausted, and that, wholly absorbed, it could not be susceptible of any feeling more intense, more sad, more soothing. Yet what a new, what a still more energetic and more powerful action is soon exercised upon it, by the *Lamentations* of the most touching of the prophets of Israel, whose moanful complaints the Church associates with the canticles of David !

It was a very ancient custom with the Hebrews to deplore, in funeral songs, public and private misfortunes ; the death of kings, princes, warriors, heroes, or great calamities, inflicted by Heaven upon the Jewish cities and nation. Several instances of this kind are to be found in the prophets ; nay, it is very rarely that the

denunciation of the evils with which they threaten the people is not followed by complaints of this sort, or by songs of lamentation on the fate of those who are about to be visited with the chastisements of heaven. But, by the gravity of his effusions or predictions ; by the excessive grief which he expresses ; by the vehemence and energy of his lamentations ; by the feeling which animates the most trivial of his phrases ; by the beauty, the grandeur, of the images ; by the truth of the delineations ; by the compassion, the pity, the terror, the hope, which they excite—Jeremiah seizes more forcibly upon the soul than any of the others, stirs it, troubles it, terrifies it, softens it, afflicts it, casts it down, raises it up, soothes it, and, without any of those ingenious means which art furnishes, and which rather betray the weakness than reveal the talent of man, hurries it, in some measure, along with him, whithersoever he is himself carried by inspiration, and transports it into all those states, all those situations, through which the divine spirit, whose organ he is, has caused him to pass.

And if this is the case everywhere, under what circumstances soever one reads or listens to Jeremiah, consider what must be the effect when, on the anniversary of the greatest crimes and the greatest calamities of Jerusalem, you find yourself on the spot where, his “eye running down with water,” that prophet seated himself and poured forth his lamentations, sighing in the bitterness of his soul ; when you hear him, as it were, lifting up his voice and crying : “How doth the city sit solitary that was full of people ! how is she become as a widow ! she that was great among the nations, and princess among the provinces ! how is she become tributary ! She weepeth sore in the night, and the tears are on her cheeks ! among all her lovers she hath none to comfort her.”

Is it possible, my good friend, to suppress our sighs, to restrain our tears, at so heart-rending a picture of that city, once the queen of nations, now sitting forlorn in affliction and widowhood ; forsaken by her friends, betrayed by her kindred, stretching out her hands in vain, and finding none who deigns to comfort her !

And what images again for him, who at this day sees here at Jerusalem what the prophet saw, "the ways of Zion that mourn, because none come to the solemn feasts; those priests who sigh, those virgins who are afflicted, those gates destroyed, and herself in bitterness; her adversaries prevailing over her, and her children gone into captivity before the enemy."

O how much more quickly and painfully does this cry so tender, so peircing, penetrate to the recesses of the heart: "All ye that pass by, behold and see if there be any sorrow like unto my sorrow, wherewith the Lord hath afflicted me in the day of his fierce anger."

Admirable song of lamentation, in which is written, under the dictation of the holy spirit, the history of the wrath of God against backsliding nations; in which rulers and subjects, who have transgressed against the supreme Majesty, may learn that those to whom they attribute the strokes which alight upon them are merely the instruments of the anger of that great God who himself smites, and chastises, and punishes, through them.

At the conclusion of the *Darkness*, first, the officiating Father and then the other monks give a signal, by striking upon the benches with their books; and, in a moment, as with us in Europe, the boys in the church, or kept at the door, deafen us with rattles and other instruments with which they are provided, and then go to make the same racket before the houses of the Catholics.

This clatter, to which more than one signification is attached in the western Church, is here generally interpreted as a memorial of the earthquake, the crash of the rocks, and the convulsion of nature, at the death of Jesus Christ.

Holy-Thursday, the anniversary of the institution of the Lord's Supper and the foot-washing, is more particularly designated in Palestine by the appellation of *the day of the Mysteries*. Kept by the whole Catholic universe, and especially by the eastern Church, till the period when the special festival of Corpus Christi was established,

it is still celebrated at Jerusalem with more pomp than anywhere else in the world.

On that day the church was decorated as for the greatest solemnities. The concourse of Catholics from Jerusalem and Bethlehem, of pilgrims, of curious spectators, Armenian or Mahometan, was still more considerable than on Palm-Sunday : and every one strove to get nearest the sacred tomb.

The solemn mass began at nine o'clock. The officiating Father, and the priests who assisted him at the altar, were attired in garments of black velvet, set off by embroidery in gold, of such beauty that I do not recollect to have ever seen anything richer and more magnificent. No other dresses than these were worn during the last three days of the Passion week. They were a present, I was told, from an archbishop of Valence, who paid ninety thousand francs for them.

When mass was over, six monks, dressed in copes glistening with gold and silver, went to receive beneath a magnificent canopy the most reverend Father wardens, who brought in great pomp the holy sacrament to the sepulchre. Ranged in two rows, the Fathers of the Holy Land, and after them the congregation, accompanied him, carrying torches, singing hymns, and manifesting by a slow and respectful pace, and by deep devotion, the firmest faith and the warmest gratitude for the august mystery. In this manner the procession went thrice round the Holy Sepulchre, and then stopped at the door. The officiating priest, followed by the others, entered ; the interior was lighted by a great number of tapers and lamps ; he deposited the host in a portable tabernacle of silver, of beautiful workmanship and great value, placed on the marble slab which covers the Sepulchre ; and, after adoring it for some moments, he went forth and on the threshold began singing the vespers of the day, and the altars in the church were meanwhile stripped.

The host is left thus upon the tomb till the service of the following day. During the intermediate time, two Fathers come successively to pass an hour there in ado-

ration. Admittance is refused to laymen, and even to pilgrims who are not ecclesiastics.

At half-past two, the foot-washing took place. This ceremony, which commemorates in so touching a manner the deep humiliation of our Saviour, is performed at the door of the Holy Sepulchre with great solemnity. Twelve monks had been appointed beforehand to represent the twelve apostles ; I had the happiness to be one of them. Assisted by a deacon and a sub-deacon, the most reverend Father warden, dressed in an alb, came to us, and, kneeling down, washed our feet with water which he took from a silver basin. He wiped them, made the sign of the cross upon them with his thumb, humbly kissed them, and then gave to each a small crucifix of mother-of-pearl, as a memorial.

I had formed the design of washing on that day the feet of twelve poor persons, at the same hour and in the same place where our Lord had performed that office for his disciples ; and for this purpose to go to the hall of the Last Supper. I expected to meet with the less difficulty, as my dragoman and I were acquainted with the owner, and I hoped that money would accomplish the rest. To my great regret, he came and told me that he could not grant the favour which I solicited, and that if I had not already visited the hall of the Last Supper, I should have been obliged to make up my mind to leave Jerusalem without seeing it. "The Egyptian government," he added, in a positive tone, "has given me the most precise orders on this subject." It would not have been prudent to express dissatisfaction or to complain : I insisted no further. Besides, I had been present at a very animated conversation between him and an officer of the pacha's on the same subject, which gave me reason to think that my Turk told the truth.

At half-past three, as on the preceding day, the Fathers came and chanted the service of the Darkness at the entrance of the Holy Sepulchre. Again I heard the prophetic voice of David relating the passion of the Saviour making atonement for the sins of men ; again I heard the plaintive accents of Jeremiah, which the

nakedness of the church, stripped of all its ornaments, rendered still more melancholy; and again my tears flowed abundantly.

It is a rule, confirmed by long custom, for the Latin Fathers not to give up the sanctuaries to the professors of the schismatic creeds till the conclusion of the offices, that is to say, till the host has been removed from the Holy Sepulchre. Till then the church is kept shut. This year, a serious altercation had arisen between the Armenians and the Greeks; and the latter, accustomed to pick a quarrel with the catholics, had not been sparing of abuse of the latter, though they had not interfered at all in the dispute. As this state of things excited some apprehensions for the following day, the Turkish police kept a strict watch at the door, with a view to prevent disturbance.

On Good-Friday, the morning service was performed at Calvary with the most touching ceremonies by the Franciscan Fathers. I was present. About nine o'clock, loud cries, coming from about the church, suddenly interrupted the prayers: the uproar kept increasing, and we soon learned the cause of it. A violent conflict had taken place between the Armenians and the Greeks. Tired of waiting, both insisted furiously that the door should be opened; and pushing, thrusting, shouting, they reciprocally strove to keep off their opponents, that they might get in first themselves. A few minutes afterwards, we learned, not without alarm, that force or treachery had opened the door, and that the crowd was rushing in from all sides. "Good God! and the most holy Sacrament!" exclaimed Father Perpetuus, secretary of the Holy Land, who was next to me. At these words, I dashed down Calvary, forced my way with some difficulty through the crowd, and penetrated into the Holy Sepulchre, determined to lose my life rather than suffer a sacrilegious profanation. I found myself alone: luckily the Turkish guard succeeded in its efforts to keep back the most headstrong, and by its energetic resistance afforded time to finish the holy ceremonies. The host was carried back in procession to the church of the Franciscan Fathers, and

the sanctuaries were not given up to the Greeks till all the catholics had retired.

At dinner, the whole community, the father warden at their head, ate upon their knees : bread, water, and a few leaves of salad constituted the whole repast.

At half past three, the Fathers went to the office of the Darkness, as on the two preceding days. It was the last time that I should hear at Jerusalem the voice of the prophet of Anathoth, and that idea caused me to feel more sensibly the vehemence of the tenderness of his lamentations. You may sometimes have had occasion to remark how much deeper an impression is made by the words and wishes of those we love when the hour of parting arrives, especially when we are thoroughly convinced that we shall never meet again : then the heart is more than ever oppressed ; sighs escape us ; the eyes are moistened with tears ; it is a kind of suffering which differs but little from that produced by the rupture of ties which death has just broken. Such, and even more painful, were my feelings, when Jeremiah pronounced those words so perfectly in harmony with the doleful mystery of Good-Friday and with the thoughts that filled my soul :—

“The joy of our hearts is ceased ; our dance is turned into mourning. The crown is fallen from our head : wo unto us that we have sinned. For this our heart is faint, for these things our eyes are dim. Because of the mountain of Sion which is desolate ; the foxes walk upon it. Thou, O Lord, remainest for ever ; thy throne from generation to generation. Wherefore dost thou forget us for ever, and forsake us so long time ? Turn thou us to thee, O Lord, and we shall be turned ; renew our days as of old.”

In order to impress the more deeply upon the mind the remembrance of the passion and death of our Saviour, and to excite more forcibly in the heart the feelings of compunction, gratitude, and love, which they ought to produce, the Fathers perform every year, on Good Friday, a ceremony entirely harmonizing with the spirit of the Orientals, and examples of which we find only in the missions in Asia, which probably borrowed it from the practice adopted in Palestine.

By means of a figure in relievo, of the natural size, the head and limbs of which are flexible, they represent the crucifixion, the taking down from the cross, and the burial of Jesus Christ, in such a manner as to render all the principal circumstances perceptible and striking.

This ceremony, at once touching and awful, took place towards the close of day, amidst an immense concourse of men, women, and children, drawn together, some by sincere piety, others by a curiosity wholly profane.

The Fathers of the Holy Land, assembled in the chapel of the Blessed Virgin, left it about six, having at their head, one of their number, who, escorted by the young Arabs of the monastery, bore the great crucifix. The monks and the Catholics, walking slowly, in two lines, with torches in their hands, recited, in a shrill and plaintive tone, sometimes the *Miserere*, at others, the *Stabat*.

The procession stopped, first at the altar of the Division of the Garments, and next at that of the *Impropere*, where a short, simple address, but full of unction, on the painful scenes of the Passion, commemorated by those two places, was delivered by a Spanish Father. It then pursued its course, without interruption, to the top of Golgotha.

There, the monk who carried the crucifix, set it down with reverence at the foot of the altar, and the Spanish Father, resuming his discourse, continued, in presence of the multitude, deeply affected and melting into tears, the melancholy account of the sufferings and ignominy endured by our Saviour till the moment when he was crucified.

He then ceased speaking, and the image of Jesus, having been nailed to the wood, this crucifix was set up on the same spot where had been erected the real cross, on which the salvation of the human race was consummated. The good friar, in a voice broken and almost stifled by sobs, then recounted the last words and the last moments of the august victim, giving himself up a sacrifice on this spot, to atone for our sins and to reconcile us with his Father. But it became more and more

difficult to hear him : the crowd, already powerfully moved by what had preceded, was attentive only to what it saw, and it could scarcely catch the words of the speaker for cries, sobs, sighs, and tears.

After an interval of a quarter of an hour had been allowed for their grief to subside, one of the Fathers, provided with hammer and pincers, ascended to the top of the cross, took off the crown of thorns, and, while some of his brethern supported the body, by means of white scarfs passed under the arms, extracted the nails from the hands and the feet ; and presently the image was taken down, nearly in the same manner as Christ himself was. The officiating Father, and all the monks in turn, advanced in silence, knelt down, and kissed respectfully the crown and the nails, which were immediately presented to the veneration of the multitude.

The procession soon moved away, in the same order as it had come to Calvary. The crown and the nails were carried in a silver basin by a monk, and the image by four others, in the same manner as a corpse is borne to the grave. They paused at the stone of the Uncion, to imitate, on that spot, the pious action of Joseph of Arimathea, Nicodemus, and the holy women. All the requisite materials had been prepared ; the stone was covered with a very fine white sheet ; on the corners were vases of perfumes. The body, wrapped in a shroud, was laid upon it, with the head resting upon a pillow. The officiating priest sprinkled it with essences, caused some aromatics to be burned, and having prayed a few moments in silence, explained, in a brief exhortation, the motive of this station. The procession then continued its course to the church ; the image was laid upon the marble slab of the Holy Sepulchre, and another discourse concluded the ceremony.

On the following day, Saturday, the Fathers performed the service with solemnity. The benediction of the fire and of the tapers, the reading of the prophecies, the blessing of the baptismal fonts, the mass, and all the ceremonies which accompany it, differ but little from what is practised in our churches in the West. But

what I cannot help noticing, because it is to me, a subject of ever new admiration, is that piety, that modesty, that gravity of the good Fathers, which at all times, and especially on Holy-Saturday, present so extraordinary, so striking a contrast with the worship, demeanour, and manners of the Greek bishops and priests. Holy-Saturday is the day on which the latter take advantage, most grossly, and most beneficially for themselves, of the simplicity and ignorance of their adherents. Turning into derision the ancient custom of the Latin Church, to extract the new fire on that day from a flint, they give out that to them, the particular objects of divine favour, heaven itself takes care to send the paschal fire, and that, by a special privilege, their bishops are the only happy mortals chosen to receive it in their hands.

After the procession has gone thrice round the Holy Sepulchre, a bishop and two priests, whom he takes for his assistants, shut themselves up in it, and there stay till, as they say, the Lord has granted their prayers. Meanwhile, the priests and the deacons, crowding around the door, continue singing lustily amidst the noise and clamour of the people, impatient to learn the accomplishment of the prodigy. Presently it is announced that the heavenly fire has descended ; all the lamps in the Sepulchre are quickly lighted ; the doors are thrown open ; the bishop appears, holding in his hand a few small tapers, lighted at the divine flame ; and the amazed multitude, not doubting the miracle, hasten with torches to participate in it. Having witnessed these ridiculous tricks, the vociferations and the uproar amidst which they are performed, I am obliged to confess that, if anything appeared to me really miraculous, it was the inconceivable stupidity of those who were their dupes.

On that day, the governor of Jerusalem, accompanied by his principal officers, attended the service ; it is a right which is reserved for him ; he may even go to it, when he pleases, with the women of his harem. He came to see the different ceremonies, and, among others, that of the distribution of the fire by the Greeks. It is

a remarkable thing that the marvellous operation never commences till he is present, and has given the signal for it. As soon as he had spoken, heaven obeyed him, and it was evident that, before it sent down the paschal fire to the objects of its especial favour, it had condescended to wait till a Turk had given permission for it.

At midnight, the Fathers return to the service. I am no longer young : I have travelled much ; I have seen many fine sights in my life, but never do I recollect to have beheld a more magnificent, a more imposing scene than that presented by the church of the Holy Sepulchre in the night between Saturday and Easter-Sunday. Figure to yourself, my friend, a nave of immense magnitude, illuminated in every part with extraordinary taste and profusion, ten thousand pilgrims, arrayed in their best apparel, carrying torches in their hands, the women and children filling the vast extent of the galleries, also holding torches, and all making the sacred vaults ring with glorious Hallelujahs ; while bishops, covered with gold and precious stones, preceded by censer-bearers, perfuming their passage with incenses, and followed by a considerable number of priests in white copes richly embroidered with gold, walk in procession round the tomb, in the order assigned to each nation, singing psalms and hymns in honour of Him, who by his resurrection triumphed over death : imagine, I say, such a scene, and calculate, if you can, the impression which it must produce upon the soul of every one who has eyes. From my mind it banished even the recollection of the painful things which had so recently afflicted me. “ Hallelujah ! hallelujah ! ” I cried, in the transports of a joy, whose vehemence I could not moderate ; “ hallelujah ! hallelujah ! ” and I blessed the God of mercy for having guided my steps to Jerusalem, and for having granted me the favour to mingle my cries of gladness with the cries of the pious Christians who had the happiness to celebrate the victory of his divine Son on the very spot where that Son had triumphed.

A night so soothing, so consolatory for the heart, was followed by the light of the greatest of days, of that day,

par excellence, “which the Lord hath made.” I attended the different services, and I there saw displayed all the most magnificent gifts sent thither in better times by Christian Europe. The tapestries with which the church was adorned, the crosses, the chandeliers, the lamps, the pontifical ornaments, those of the simple priests, were so many memorials of the antique piety and beneficence of sovereigns. An altar, pompously decked out with everything that could heighten the splendour of the festival, was placed at the door of the Holy Sepulchre. There the Father Warden performed mass pontifically. He himself administered the communion to the numerous Catholics and to the pilgrims, who, two by two, and with deep devotion, presented themselves at the holy table ; and the service concluded with a solemn benediction.

The evening, like the morning, passed in prayer, in sacred joy ; and, when night came, the church still resounded with hymns, with psalms, and, above all, with the song of glory—“Hallelujah !”

Farewell, my dear friend. To-morrow, according to all appearance, I shall return to the monastery of St. Saviour ; I shall visit that of St. John as soon as possible, and, when I have finished the business that still detains me, I shall set out for Galilee.

LETTER XXXIV.

Excursion to St. John's in the Desert—Convent of the Holy Cross—Village of St. John—Monastery—Beautiful Church belonging to the Franciscan Fathers—Sanctuary—Place of the Visitation—Grotto of St. John Baptist—Desert—Tomb of St. Elizabeth.

Jerusalem, April 28, 1832.

I HAVE taken advantage of my first leisure since Easter to make a short excursion in the mountains of Judea. I have just returned from St. John's in the Desert, and now give you the particulars of my visit to that monastery.

The road leading to it is like all those in Palestine, stony and almost impassable : it is but slowly and with great difficulty that you can travel along it.

I was accompanied, as usual, by my dragoman. We turned a little out of our road to see a convent that belongs to the Georgians, and bears the name of the Holy Cross. If we may credit a pious tradition, this convent was built on the spot where the Jews, after the condemnation of our Saviour, cut down the tree which they made the instrument of his execution. The church is clean and decorated ; it is chiefly lighted by a very beautiful dome. The walls are covered with paintings in fresco, the colours of which are almost effaced by time.

When we had got back into our road, my dragoman pointed out to me, a little farther on, a very high ground, upon which, according to the general belief, the ark of the covenant was set down for some time.

After an hour's march, or thereabout, from this spot, we perceived the village of St. John, towards which we descended. It is two leagues distant from Jerusalem.

The monastery is situated in the centre of the village. It is a remarkable edifice, raised on a vast platform, so as

to overlook the country to a great distance. The church, taken away and profaned by the infidels, remained for a long time in a state of ruin. Louis XIV. recovered it from their hands, and caused it to be repaired and adorned in such a manner that it is now one of the handsomest and most regular in the East. It belongs to the Franciscan Fathers of the Holy Land, who send Spanish monks of their order to do duty there.

The site of the house of Zachariah, where St. John Baptist was born, is within the church itself. A sanctuary has been constructed in it like most of those that are to be seen in Palestine. You descend to it by a flight of marble steps, and come to an altar where the good Fathers say mass every day. Around this sanctuary are magnificent basso-relievos, representing the birth of the holy Forerunner, the baptism of Christ, and his death. At the centre, in the pavement, is imbedded a circular marble, likewise surrounded with relievos, on which is this inscription :

HIC PRÆCURSOR DOMINI NATUS EST.

The Turks who live at St. John, are more malignant than most of those who are masters of the country around Jerusalem. They omit no opportunity of annoying the Fathers of the monastery by their extortions and injustice, and not a year passes in which these poor monks have not a great deal to suffer.

Not far from the monastery is the valley of Turpentine, so called from the great number of turpentine-trees growing there. It is five or six hundred paces in circumference, and the soil is fertile : the hills which border it are covered with olive, pomegranate, and fig-trees. On this spot were encamped the Hebrews commanded by Saul, when they were insulted by Goliath. I have seen the brook in which David picked up five stones, with one of which he slew the giant.

A quarter of a league distant is the place known by the name of the Visitation. It is situated on the slope of a hill, where Zachariah and Elizabeth had a country-

house. Tradition relates that the Virgin Mary first went to the house where Elizabeth usually resided, in the village which now bears the name of St. John Baptist, and where John was born, but, not finding her cousin there, she went on to her country-house.

On the site of this house, St. Helena caused a very handsome church to be built. There are still left considerable ruins of it, from amidst which rise large trees, one of them majestically overtopping all the rest. In exploring these ruins, the aspect of which is truly picturesque, I came to a sort of chapel, at the farther end of which is an altar formed of several large stones rudely placed one upon another, and I learned from the guide who accompanied me that the monks of St. John go hither every year on pilgrimage, and perform mass there on the day of the Visitation. This chapel, if such it can still be called, stands on the very spot where Elizabeth met her who was to be the mother of the Saviour of mankind, and who was inspired by the Holy Spirit with that admirable hymn, the prophetic of which, repeated from age to age, have resounded for eighteen hundred years in all the solemnities of the Christian church.

I remarked upon the altar two small earthen vases containing flowers, which were beginning to fade. These were, no doubt, the homage of some poor Christians of St. John. I wished in my turn to leave a humble tribute to the mother of Jesus, to my patroness, to her whose name, becoming my own on the day of my religious profession, was given to me as a pledge of grace and blessing. I went forth, and, searching about in the neighbouring fields, I picked up a few fresh flowers, and formed with them a little bouquet, which I respectfully deposited upon the altar.

What I had just done, however, was not sufficient for the emotions of gratitude and love that I felt so deliciously springing up in my heart. Since I have been a monk, I have never attended any of the services of the church, especially on the days set apart for honouring the Virgin Mary, when the *Magnificat* has not exalted my soul and awakened within me the most soothing thoughts,

the tenderest affections. How many times have I not asked myself how words so grand, so sublime, so divine, could have issued from the lips of a humble girl ; born of poor parents, without education and without art, how that obscure virgin, who never knew the world, and whom the world never knew, could foretell that the whole world, that "all generation," should not only know her, but "should thenceforth for ever call her blessed." And to the questions which my surprise suggested, I saw, as I still see, no other answer than the very words of Mary's hymn : It is because "the Lord regarded the low estate of his handmaiden ;" because "he that is mighty had done great things for her ;" because "he had showed strength with his arm, and scattered the proud in the imagination of their hearts."

And, in the transport into which I was thrown by such a prodigy, I could not sufficiently thank God for having decreed that well-disposed men should find in the *Magnificat* one of the finest prophetic evidences of the divinity of that religion which Christ came to bring upon earth.

But who could then have told me that I should some day have the happiness to stand upon the spot where Mary had stood, amid the ruins of that unknown dwelling, whence the divine canticle issued to spread to the uttermost ends of the earth ! That happiness thrilled me. That I might be able to give more free scope to the feelings with which I was penetrated, I ordered my dragoman and my guide to withdraw for a short time ; and, being left alone, I began to sing the *Magnificat* with a loud voice, though tremulous with emotion, and I chanted it to the end, pausing at every verse to enjoy the delicious feelings, the consolation, the admiration which it excited.

On quitting the chapel of the Visitations, we pursued our course towards the grotto of St. John Baptist, a league and a half distant. My dragoman pointed out to me by the way a stone, or mass of rock, which attracts the notice of pilgrims, because, according to tradition, John frequently preached there to the multitude that followed him.

The desert is dry and barren. On the surrounding hills are, nevertheless, to be seen some mean villages, and among them one very near the grotto, which the saint inhabited.

This cavern is in the interior of a rock, the access to which is rugged and difficult. In climbing up to it with too great haste, I had so severe a fall that for a moment I was afraid that I should not be able to go any farther. For some minutes I lay stunned by the accident, and quite unable to rise. To no purpose I called for help to my guide, whom I had left behind ; instead of hastening up, the idiot stood still, looking at me and crying out to me with all his might to go more slowly. I was obliged to wait till the pain I felt had subsided, and to get up of myself as well as I could.

The cavern is about twelve feet long by eight wide. The Franciscan Fathers go thither to say mass on the festival of the saint. The spot is marked where he was accustomed to lie down to rest. At the farther end is a spring, the water of which is excellent. I filled a bottle with it, and carried away with me a few little pieces of stone from the rock.

The spot where was situated the tomb of Elizabeth is a quarter of a league distant. It is pointed out by a tree and a few stones. I did not go thither: it was late, and suffering from my fall, I was anxious to get back to the monastery.

LETTER XXXV.

Monastery of St. Saviour at Jerusalem—Table of the Fathers—Lent kept by them—Extortions of the Turks—Letter on this subject to the French Ambassador at Constantinople—Franciscan Missionaries—Letter and Donation of Henry VIII. of England—Gifts of the Sovereigns of Europe to the Establishments in the Holy Land—Pilgrims of Distinction in the Fifteenth Century—Annoyance of the Catholics by the Greeks—Comparison between the Greek and Latin Clergy—Reflections on the Situation of the Latin Fathers of the Holy Land.

Jerusalem, May 1, 1832.

I HAVE as yet said scarcely anything to you of the monastery of St. Saviour, which I make my home; I will now give you some particulars concerning it.

This monastery is one of the most ancient. It has been erected at different times, and without any regular plan. It consists of buildings added to buildings: they enclose three courts, and two very small gardens. Everything in it is simple, and even poor. The rooms of the monks are small and scantily furnished. The lodging of the Father warden of the Holy Sepulchre, on whose splendour certain authors, as I have already told you, have thought fit to dilate, is neither larger nor better furnished; and the meanest tradesman in Italy would certainly not be satisfied with it. The only decent apartment is the Divan, where the community assembles, and where the Father warden receives such persons as have occasion to speak with him.

Strangers are lodged in a totally separate house. There are, however, two or three rooms in the convent, which are assigned to such of them as the Fathers wish to distinguish; they are far apart from the cells of the monks, quite as poor as the rest, and, I must say, too naked for the purpose to which they are destined, especially as the lay pilgrims who occupy them always leave some tokens of their munificence. Upon the whole, such are the

poverty and the simplicity of life prevailing in the monastery, that I never saw anything which presented a more striking contrast with the lying reports of writers by whom it is slandered : of this a circumstance relating to myself will serve better than anything else that could be said to convey a correct idea.

As I had come hither with several letters of recommendation, and, among them, one from the Sacred Congregation of Rome, it was thought right to pay me particular deference and respect ; and I was, therefore, offered one of the best cells opposite to the apartment of the Father warden. This cell is allotted to such of the monks only as hold some office. Well—all the furniture I had there consisted of a common chair and an old broken armchair ; and the secretary remarked that he had given me, as a favour, one of his towels. When I wanted water, I had to fetch it myself ; and, to sweep my room, I borrowed a broom from the monk in the adjoining cell.

The fare of the Fathers is extremely frugal. The mutton, the only meat they can procure, is very bad ; vegetables are scarce : everything is cooked with oil, and that of the country is not good.

Besides the Lent instituted by the Church, and which is generally observed as a preparation for Easter, the Franciscan Fathers have another of about two months, from the first of November to Christmas, and not less do they sanctify the rest of the year by religious austerities. Immortification is certainly a sin everywhere ; but at Jerusalem it becomes a crime, especially in a monk, and this the Franciscan knows : he knows that a disciple of Jesus Christ, feasting himself here, and pampering his sensual appetites, would be an object as worthy of horror as a parricide, perfuming and crowning himself with roses, on the very spot where he had murdered his father.

But the privations imposed by the seasons specially devoted to penitence, and those added under other circumstances by zeal or the rules of the order, are nothing in comparison with the hardships and privations of another kind, to which the monk of the Holy Land is

doomed. On leaving his country to come hither through a thousand dangers, he must have made up his mind to a life of trouble, far from all that is dearest to him, without thenceforth being able to find any other peace than that imparted by a good conscience, any other joy than that inward joy with which Christ repays the sacrifices that we make to his love.

If the Turks tolerate him among them, if they allow him to celebrate the holy mysteries agreeably to the Catholic ritual, it is not so much because the Catholics have paid dearly for that right, as because that toleration is a continual source of profit to their sordid avarice, to that greediness, that thirst of money which nothing can satiate. Besides the annual tribute paid by the monastery, it is obliged to submit to the particular extortions of pachas, governors, and subordinate officers, and to purchase, by arbitrary and sometimes enormous sums, a tranquillity always transient and of short duration. Not a month passes but cries of death ring around the holy habitation : to-day, it is the plague, from which you are never safe ; to-morrow, an insurrection ; next, wars between the pachas, the successive extortions of the conquerors, the annoyance and exactions of the Arabs. In short, the monk of St. Francis is a man of sorrows, who cannot hope for any other happiness on earth than in bearing his cross with fortitude, and following Jesus Christ to Calvary.

All the Catholic establishments in the East, excepting one, that at Cairo, which is under the protection of Austria, are under that of France ; and to this power they have recourse, when it becomes impossible for them to bear the excessive oppression which they sometimes undergo. Nothing can convey a more accurate notion of the position of the monks of the Holy Land than the following letter, addressed in 1805, by the superiors and the Father warden, to M. Horace Sebastiani, at that time ambassador of France at Constantinople.

“ The unparalleled acts of injustice, the extortions, the arbitrary imposts, which for some years past have followed one another in rapid succession, on the part of the

pachas, the governors, and their subordinate officers, have reduced us to such a state, that, unable to subsist, we shall shortly be obliged to leave the Holy Land, unless we can obtain the means of preventing the Turks from continuing to rob us of a quantity of money, which they do with threats, insults, and even the bastinado.

“Ever since the year 1762, there was given to the pacha of Damascus, who was governor of Jerusalem, only seven thousand piasters, with seven thousand more for the services which he had rendered to the Holy Land; and such was the state of things till the death of Mahomet Pacha Ebneladin. But, in 1783, Mohamed Djezar, pacha of Damascus and Jerusalem, began to take by force twenty-five thousand piasters more than it was customary to pay. This continued for seven years, during which he was at different times governor, to say nothing of other exactions with which he was incessantly harassing us. All our representations to the Porte were unavailing, as this pacha obeyed none of its firmans; and what was worse, all the other pachas followed his example; so that, in the year 1797, the Pacha Abdallah Ebneladin, having become governor of Damascus, took from us by force thirty thousand piasters, exclusively of the sum that was annually paid him. We were not then able to make any remonstrances, having been, to crown our misfortunes, persecuted by the Turks of the party hostile to this pacha, who not only took possession of our monastery but threw us into prison, where we ran a thousand risks of death, and were obliged to give seven hundred purses to stop the persecutions which the grandees had excited against us, besides twenty-four thousand piasters to the mufti Sheik Hassan Elasnad, our sworn foe. And, after all these losses, there came the pacha Hemad Abumarah, who, during the short time that he remained at Jerusalem and Jaffa, tyrannically wrung from us three hundred purses, besides two hundred more which he took by the name of a loan, but not a medina of which have we been able to get back, notwithstanding all the trouble that we have taken on the subject; and lastly, what completely discourages and casts us down is, that, six

weeks ago, there came the pacha whom we have already mentioned, Abdallah Ebneladin, pacha of Damascus, who, in addition to the seven thousand piasters that we gave him, demanded a sum equal to all the money that we had paid to Djezar, assigning as a reason that the latter had unjustly taken possession of his pachalik, and that consequently the money we had given to Djezar was by right his: and he forced us, with the dagger at our throats, to give him one hundred thousand piasters, in spite of the kalmarif of the Porte, which we showed him, which is an irrevocable order enjoining him to be content with the usual tribute. He absolutely refused to read it, calling it a *rag of paper*, for which he did not care. Accordingly, he took the hundred thousand piasters, and went away, leaving us a prey to all our other enemies. Indeed, no sooner had he quitted Jerusalem, than the Bedouins seized three of our monks, whom they detained for a month, with a view to force us thereby to reimburse them for the contributions which they had had to pay to the pacha. God knows how this will end; and we should not have words sufficient, were we to attempt to describe all our sufferings: the very santons of Mount Sion take large sums from us, and prevent us from burying our dead, whether monks or other Catholics, if we give them a refusal."

From this letter you may judge, my friend, of the state of the monks of the Holy Land, and that to which they would be reduced, if the alms of the pious were to be withheld from them.

It must not be supposed that persecutions of the kind which they here complain of are very rare; they are, on the contrary, frequent, and almost always inevitable in time of war or rebellion. How much had they not to suffer, for instance, in 1826, during the struggle between the pacha of Acre and the pacha of Damascus! In the month of September, the former having laid siege to the Holy City, the unfortunate Franciscans were exposed to all imaginable outrages and extortions. Not only had they to support all the Christians of Jerusalem, who had taken refuge in the monastery to avoid the violence of

the Turks, but they were compelled to pay sums so enormous that they were obliged to pawn the sacred vessels, happy to extricate themselves from the dilemma at that rate. To defray all these expenses, the Fathers of the Holy Land have no resource but the donations of Christendom, and, unluckily, these are becoming more and more scanty. Yet, how can alms be better applied? it were to be wished, for the greater glory of God, that they were more abundant.

If I had the honour to be a priest and a preacher, I should consider it my duty, on my return to Europe, to ascend the pulpit and make the pious acquainted as well with the deplorable situation as with the admirable virtues of those monks, who, appointed to take care of the manger, of Calvary, of the tomb of the divine Redeemer, defend, at the peril of their lives, those sacred trusts; and who, prostrate in the dust, never cease to pray for the Church and for the Christian sovereigns and nations. I would make them sensible of the value of that devotedness, and of the obligation they are under to contribute to the support of those heroes of the faith, whom the most stupid impiety alone could term "fanatical monks, kneeling before a few stones to deceive the vulgar;" in short, I would teach them—for, in this age of "enlightenment," how many are there that are yet ignorant of the fact!—that monachism in the Holy Land is a second Providence, not only for the Catholics scattered throughout Egypt and Syria, but even for many travellers who have not the happiness to belong to our holy religion.

I cannot stop, my dear Charles, to descant at length upon those fervent Franciscan missionaries, who come to the East to devote themselves for twelve years to the instruction and salvation of souls; and who, in Cairo, Alexandria, the Isle of Cyprus, at Jerusalem, Bethlehem, Nazareth, Jaffa, Rama, Acre, Seida, Tripoli in Syria, Damascus, Aleppo, Constantinople, fulfil this mission with a zeal, a charity, an edification, worthy of the primitive times of the Church; but I will tell you that the Fathers of the Holy Land constantly take care of

the Catholics who are in distress ; and that it is principally in times of calamity that they show themselves above all praise, paying the rent of the poor, and the fines and the duties exacted from them by the government ; distributing bread to the needy, soup to the infirm ; giving shoes, and articles of clothing to indigent women ; sending the physician of the monastery to the sick, and supplying them with the medicines which he prescribes. The widows and the orphans are particular objects of their paternal solicitude.

Not only in Jerusalem is it thus : the same course is pursued in the principal convents, at Bethlehem, at Nazareth, at St. John's, as well as at all the other monastic establishments in the Holy Land, Egypt, and Syria ; and everywhere more is done than I have yet told you : when they know of a person in distress, they never ask to what religion he belongs before they afford relief.

The Fathers of the Holy Land, at Jerusalem, lodge and feed for a month all the pilgrims who apply to them, excepting the Greeks, the Armenians, &c., who find an asylum in the monasteries belonging to their respective nations. In all places where they have convents, they keep at their own expense a schoolmaster, specially charged to teach the Arab youth, in the first place, religion ; and in the next, reading, writing, and the Italian language ; and to this valuable boon they add that of feeding the children who receive these lessons.

Such, in a few words, my friend, is the use made by the Fathers of the Holy Land of the alms which they collect : for themselves they reserve scarcely sufficient to procure absolute necessaries. And now, I ask you, if people knew, if they saw, what I know and what I see, could Christian piety help deeming it a duty to afford them assistance ?

Among the many documents recording the munificence of which the sovereigns and princes of Europe formerly gave striking demonstrations to the religious establishments of the Holy Land, there is one which you will probably be as much surprised as pleased to find here. It is a letter, dated 1516, from Henry VIII. of England,

then the stanch defender of Catholicism and Catholics, but fifteen years afterwards their most furious persecutor. We see from this epistle, the original of which is in Latin, what an interest that monarch took in the sanctuaries of Palestine, and how solicitious he was that the Fathers appointed to take care of them, and to exercise their sacred ministry there, should be secured from want.

“ Henry, by the grace of God, king of England and France, and lord of Ireland—

“ To our dearly beloved, venerable, and religious men, the Father Warden and the Brethren of the holy Order of Minors of the Observance, dwelling by the sepulchre of our Lord, greeting :

“ The tender attachment excited in us in our childhood by the evangelical life which you lead, and your incessant labours in the vineyard of the Lord, induces us to give you our assistance and to contribute to the support of the sacred edifices, so much the more because, with a zeal surpassing that of others in the places where ye are, ye make it an habitual occupation to receive pilgrims, to relieve them, and to perform many other works of charity ; because ye apply yourselves to adorn as well as to glorify, by psalms, and hymns, and perpetual sacrifices of praise, the holy places which, for our salvation, the Lord has sprinkled with his blood, especially his sacred tomb, a manifest proof of our future resurrection ; and lastly, because ye have daily to endure injuries and outrages, stripes, wounds, and torments.

“ In consequence, that ye may be able to bear these tribulations the more cheerfully, and to devote yourselves with the more ardour to prayer and other good works, and that, destined to receive a great reward in heaven, ye may be mindful of us, we give and assign to you, by these our letters, a yearly alms of one thousand gold crowns, or an equivalent sum, to be continued during our will and good pleasure ; and which, in virtue of our ordinance, ye shall begin to receive at Rhodes, after next Whitsuntide, from the hands of the grand master of Rhodes, and so on from year to year, after the said

feast, always, as herein above expressed, according to our will and good pleasure.

“To this end, ye will go to the said grand master of Rhodes, to whose kindness and good offices we have recourse for this payment, and ye will pray to the Most High for us.

“In faith and testimony of this our present alms, we have signed with our own hand these our letters patent, and have ordered them to be corroborated by the affixing of our privy seal.

“Given in our palace at Greenwich, the 23d of November, in the year of our Lord 1516, and in the eighth of our reign.

Signed,
And lower down,

“HENRICUS REX.”

“ANDREAS HAMMON.”

The original, written upon parchment, is in the archives of the convent of St. Isidore at Rome.

But it was not Henry VIII. alone who showed himself so liberal to the establishments in the Holy Land. There was a time when the Catholic sovereigns vied with one another in generosity towards them; and there is not a church or a sacristy in all Palestine where you do not meet with some tokens of it. France, Spain, Portugal, Germany, Poland, Venice, Tuscany, Naples, Rome, and the other states of Italy, cheerfully sent their offerings to the holy places. That I may not tire you with the detail of so many donations, I shall notice those of Spain alone, which are the most considerable.

Isabella, queen of Castille, not only delighted to strip herself of valuable jewels in favour of the Holy Sepulchre, but assigned to the monks a yearly alms of one thousand gold crowns.

The emperor Charles V. caused the church, which threatened to fall to ruin, to be repaired at his expense.

Philip II. sent an extremely rich dress of black velvet, on which were embroidered, in fine pearls, magnificent designs of our Lord's passion, and of the principal saints of the order of St. Francis.

Philip III. and his queen, Margaret, not only allotted to the monks a yearly sum of thirty thousand ducats, but gave cups, albs, a silver lamp of larger dimensions than any then known, and multiplied their donations to such a degree, that it was a common saying in the monastery that "his Catholic Majesty took Jerusalem for his Escorial, and that queen Margaret had turned sacristan of the Holy Sepulchre."

But Philip IV. distinguished himself above all others : he alone did more in the course of his reign for the support of the holy places than all the other princes put together in three centuries. In 1628, he sent thirty thousand ducats for the repair of the convent of Bethlehem ; and from 1640 to 1652, so abundant were the alms received from him by the Latin Fathers, that it was said of him that "he buried his treasures in the sepulchre of our Lord."

Among the gifts which even at the present day attract the notice of pilgrims, I could not help remarking with a sort of admiration the albs, those chiefly which are used only on high festivals. There are several which are embroidered in gold ; and I have seen some so much the more valuable, in my eyes at least, for having been worked by the imperial hands of the immortal Maria Theresa herself.

The Fathers of the Holy Land keep in their archives a kind of register, in which are inscribed the names of the pilgrims of note, who from time to time visit the Holy Sepulchre. In turning over the list of distinguished persons whom piety brought to Jerusalem in the course of the fifteenth century, I have found among others, under the year 1486, the following names:—

Among the Germans: John, duke of Pagern ; William, count of Werdenberg ; Dubolt de Hasperg, knight ; Louis de Rechtberg ; Joseph, noble of Zug ;—and among the French: De Châteaubriant, governor of Lyons ; De Salouiller ; Guido Pussart de Sainte-Marthe ; André d'Ungerie, chamberlain to the king.

I should have made you but very imperfectly acquainted with the position of the monks of the Holy Land,

were I not to say a few words concerning the vexations and annoyances which the Greeks are incessantly stirring up against them.

Nothing gives them more uneasiness, or obliges them to be more upon their guard, than the continual manœuvres by which their enemies strive to wrest from the Catholics the few sanctuaries that are still left them. Emboldened by former attempts, which proved but too successful, they watch for and dexterously seize all occasions for supplanting them, and for getting new rights granted to themselves. Powerful, from their immense wealth, as well as from the friends whom they have at Constantinople ; strong, from the number of the professors of their creed, resident in Jerusalem ; and stronger still, from that of their pilgrims ; they are formidable, and defy all consequences. If they think fit to rouse the passions against the Catholics, that they may be able to usurp some prerogatives beyond those possessed by the latter, they will go so far as to put forward the rudest, the most daring, and the most mischievous of their people, principally sailors from the Archipelago, who amount to five or six hundred, at least, at the time of the pilgrimages ; they will set them upon their enemies, in the very church of the Holy Sepulchre, not scrupling to gain by violence and scandal what justice and reason refuse them. And this is a strange circumstance : those two classes of men, Greeks and Armenians, almost always in opposition and at war with one another, never agree but to harass, to torment, to oppress, if possible, the Fathers of the Holy Land : it is then only that they cordially make common cause. Nothing can be more deplorable, nothing more hideous, than this incessant warfare around the tomb of the God of charity, of him who made it a law, a sacred duty, for his disciples to love one another. These Greeks, these Armenians, call themselves Christians, while, by their conduct, they dishonour, they ruin Christianity, and the Turk alone profits by it.

If I may depend on some particulars that I have collected, it is a fact that, in the dominions of the Porte, the Greek priests oblige the members of their flocks to visit Palestine once in their lives. Be this as it may, it is

certain, as I have already written to you, that the number of the pilgrims of the two nations who visit Jerusalem every year is mostly about ten thousand. I add that this is a source of, I may say, inexhaustible wealth for their patriarchs and their monasteries. To give you some idea of this, I must first tell you that the tribute paid them by each pilgrim amounts, one with another, to three hundred piasters. There are some who give ten or twenty times as much. Now, suppose that, instead of ten thousand, both Greeks and Armenians, the total number were only eight thousand, which is far below the truth, and calculate : you will have a total of two million four hundred thousand piasters.*

With this so considerable number of the Armenians and Greeks ; with this mountain of gold, from the summit of which their chiefs, become invulnerable, never cease hurling their thunder-bolts ; compare the humble position of the Fathers of the Holy Land, who are visited annually by at most eight or ten pilgrims, almost always poor, and perhaps a hundred travellers, drawn by curiosity, and whose principal treasure is in their patience and their virtues : what a melancholy contrast ! And, if the sources of Catholic charity should happen to fail, is it difficult to foresee the issue of that desperate struggle, carried on by one party for the purpose of seizing that which all the efforts of the other have great difficulty to defend, much less can they regain what it has lost ! It is impossible that it should not turn out to the prejudice of the Latins, or even to their utter ruin, especially in a country where, with money, you may buy pachas, governors, magistrates, judges, judgments ; the most ridiculous privileges, the most atrocious decisions ; in a country, in short, where, with money, you may not only insure impunity for the most crying injustice, but proscribe, trample upon, crush.

The danger is much more serious when, to the power of gold, men add, like the Greeks, suppleness, craft,

* The value of the piaster varies, and depends in general on the will, or, rather, the caprice of the pacha. When I was at Jerusalem it was worth eight sous French money.

perfidy, and a profound knowledge of mankind. They know that the success of their pretensions depends on the caprices of a restless, jealous, violent, tyrannical government. They will cringe basely before it; they will, if need be, bow down their faces in the dust, in token of obedience and respect; and will be still more prodigal of meannesses than of purses, which, nevertheless, to carry a point, they offer by thousands.

In their state of destitution the Latin Fathers, on the contrary, have and employ no other weapons against the different kinds of foes to whose attacks they are liable, than submission to the authority under which they live; resignation and prayer, and all the sacrifices compatible with the honour of religion and the duties of Christian piety. Simple, some of them, even to excess,* persuaded that all men are upright as themselves; neither knowing nor studying events or their consequences; ready to believe all that is told them; full of blind confidence in their dragomans, who are not monks, like those of the Greeks, and who are liable to deceive them or not to defend their interests with sufficient zeal: if, in spite of so many causes which must, one would think, hasten their fall, they continue to maintain their ground, it can only be by a particular disposition of that Providence, which commands human perverseness as well as the waves of

* Here is a characteristic trait:—Some years since an unknown personage called at the house of the Franciscan Fathers, giving himself out to be the archduke-palatine, brother of our beloved emperor. Great joy in the convent—they had his imperial highness under their roof!—"Brother Ambrose, have you seen the archduke?" "No, Father."—"Go and see him then. What an amiable prince! How different from us, those great folks! one knows them at a glance: their high birth is written, one may say, on their brows. How graciously his highness gives you his hand to kiss! it makes you cry for joy! What an honour for the monastery! You know that he had the mishap to be plundered by the Arabs. The scoundrels! rob a prince! an imperial prince! His majesty, the emperor, will certainly declare war against them, to revenge the insult offered to his family!" Such were the homely exclamations of these good and simple Fathers in favour of an impostor, whose address robbed them of a very considerable sum. Not long afterwards this adventurer was hanged in London.

the sea, and says to it : " Thus far shalt thou go and no farther."

It must be confessed, however, that if the Latin Fathers know less of the country and of men than the Greeks, this arises, probably, not so much from their neglecting that important study as from the shortness of their abode in Palestine. The Greek bishops and the official persons of their nation reside there for a very long time : they have frequent, almost daily, intercourse with the population, and thus gain an experience which they know how to employ with success. This is not the case with the Franciscans. Secluded from the Mussulmans they have none but the most indispensable relations with them ; and, with the exception of the missionaries, it is very rarely that they pass more than three years in the Holy Land. To that term the functions of the Father warden are limited. Out of these three years it takes at least one to get acquainted with business ; another to visit the scattered monasteries in Syria, Palestine, Egypt, and Cyprus. In the course of the third, he can scarcely avoid being diverted from the duties of his office, by preparations for a speedy return to his native country, which he naturally longs to see again, after so many hardships, dangers, fatigues, and humiliations. How, with such occupations and so short a stay, is it possible to gain information and influence ; and to struggle efficaciously against wealthy, wily, and stationary rivals, who are incessantly labouring to supplant you !

Were I permitted to express my thoughts to the Franciscan superiors in Europe, I would tell them that it is ardently to be wished that they would send to the Holy Land men who combine with the high piety of those with whom I passed such happy days at Jerusalem a deeper knowledge of men and things ; or who, at least, could remain there long enough to acquire it, and to make it subservient to the glory of God and the triumph of our holy religion. Full of gratitude to the good Fathers, full of admiration of their virtues, fain would I, at the expense of my blood, at the expense of the years that may still be left me on earth, procure for them the rest, the peace, and, above all, the protection which they so much need against the persecutions to which they are

liable. Since the late invasion, their tranquillity has been rather less disturbed : the Egyptian government seems to manifest a favourable disposition towards them ; it has even ordered them not to pay the Turks the sums which they were accustomed to exact. What will be the end of this ? God knows !

Adieu, my dear friend ! According to all appearance, my next letter will not be dated from Jerusalem. My eyes fill with tears ; my bosom heaves. Once more, farewell.

END OF VOL. I.



